

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
other names/site number Tennessee Archaeology Site Survey Number 40RD271

2. Location

street & number 390 East Vine Street N/A ☐ not for publication
city or town Murfreesboro NA ☐ vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Rutherford code 249 zip code 37132

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the National
Register.

☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☒ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

1

1

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

GOVERNMENT: capitol

HEALTH CARE: hospital, military

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: conservation

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

NA

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation NA

walls NA

roof NA

other STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☒ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave
- ☒ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY: historic non-aboriginal

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

MILITARY

Period of Significance

1820-1931

Significant Dates

1820, 1837, 1862-1867

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

Historic Non-Aboriginal, 1820-1931

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Middle Tennessee State University

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.53 acres Murfreesboro 315 SW**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>555278</u>	<u>3966764</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kevin E. Smith/Professor
organization Middle Tennessee State University date September 2011
street & number Box 10 telephone 615/898-5958
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's locationA **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Murfreesboro Contact: Lanny Goodwin, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
street & number 111 West Vine Street telephone 615-890-5333
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37130

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary Paragraph

Located east of the town square in modern Murfreesboro,¹ the Rutherford County seat, Tennessee, the Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesborough (Tennessee Archaeological Site Survey Number 40RD271), the Presbyterian Burying Ground, and the Old City Cemetery were originally established as separate entities, but since 1965 have been merged into a single 3.53-acre fenced lot maintained by the Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Murfreesboro (Figures 1, 2, and 4).²

Inventory of Resources

The cemeteries and church site are considered one contributing site. The gates and fence are outside the period of significance and are noncontributing.

1. Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesborough (1820-1864). The Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesborough consists of the archaeological remains of the first church building constructed in Murfreesboro (also described in secondary sources as the first brick building in Murfreesboro) along with associated church lot features including pathways and fences. The church served as the state capitol building in 1822 and as a field hospital during the Civil War.

2. Presbyterian Burying Ground (1820-1931). The Presbyterian Burying Ground was established in 1820 on the east and south sides of the church building. The original plan seems to have consisted of family plots with some sections of interspersed individual burials. Many of these family plots are still intact. The earliest marked interment is that of Robert H. Burton, born May 2, 1820 with a death date of August 31, 1821. The last marked interment in the cemetery is that of Daniel S. Brown, born 1845 and died 1931.³ This portion of the cemetery includes a significant number of both large and small pedestal obelisks, a significant number of tablet style markers, and a small number of large ledger style markers. Approximately 60 percent of the standing markers are obelisks, with the majority of other standing markers in the tablet form. If they existed, no period plantings (trees, shrubs) survive from this area, with the possible exception of the enormous tree adjacent to the Maney family plot.

¹ The two most prominent spellings of the town name have been the historical "Murfreesborough" and the modern "Murfreesboro" (along with various other abbreviations used in in historical documents). In early-mid nineteenth century documents, "Murfreesborough" is the preferred term. During the Civil War, the city name was infrequently abbreviated to Murfreesboro. This transition in common usage transitioned slowly from the use of "Murfreesborough" to "Murfreesboro" during the mid-late nineteenth century, and "Murfreesboro" became the common designation by the beginning of the twentieth century. Herein, I use the name "Murfreesborough" to refer to the pre-1900 references and "Murfreesboro" for the post-1900 references.

² Minutes of the Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter, Daughters of the American Colonists, March 18, 1965.

³ According to John C. Spence, *Annals of Rutherford County*, the first interment in the Presbyterian Burying Ground was a saloon keeper named Eldridge, probably in 1820, but the location of his grave is unknown.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

3. Old City Cemetery of Murfreesborough (1837-1931). The Old City Cemetery of Murfreesborough was the first public cemetery for the city and was established in 1837. During the Civil War, it was used as both a temporary and permanent interment area for both Confederate and Union soldiers. The cemetery was closed by city ordinance in 1872 after the establishment of Evergreen Cemetery. Although discouraged in the city ordinance, interments continued in family plots in the cemetery until 1931. This portion of the cemetery includes approximately equal quantities of large and small pedestal obelisks and tablet style markers. Three commemorative ground tablets are located in this portion of the cemetery, along with one modern family marker. If they existed, no period plantings (trees, shrubs) survive from this area. The majority of the fenceline along the property boundaries is currently in modern shrub and tree growth.

4. Gates and Fence (ca. 1965). The current fence around the lot consists of a poured concrete foundation with inset metal posts supporting a chain link fence. Although there are four gates (centered on each side of the lot), the only one in active use is the north (East Vine Street) gate. The fence and gates were placed around 1964-1965.⁴

5. Commemorative markers and replacement gravestones. Beginning as early as 1933, the property has been deemed by the local community as an appropriate place to commemorate the history of Murfreesborough and Rutherford County. As a result, a number of commemorative markers have been placed within the boundaries of the property (see discussion following). With few exceptions, they all are located in the northwestern corner of the property within the original church lot and are not intrusive elements in the cemeteries. For example, the row of commemorative "Revolutionary War" gravestones on top of the church building ruins was placed by local historical and genealogical societies between 1937 and 1976. Within the Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery, there is one large modern replacement family gravestone for the Lawrence family plot (Photograph #25), a large ground tablet replacement family marker for the Killough family, and approximately four small ground tablets for War of 1812 and Civil War soldiers.

The nearly two-century-long story of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesborough begins alongside the founding of the city in 1811 and continues in the current church building.⁵ At the time the church was completed, the congregation created what became known as the "Presbyterian Burying Ground" within the church lot east and south of the building proper. In 1837, the City of Murfreesborough purchased land to the south and east of the church lot to create the first public city cemetery, now known as the "Old City Cemetery." After destruction of the church building in the winter of 1863-64, construction of a new church across town, and the creation of Evergreen as the "new" city cemetery, the once separate church site and cemeteries were gradually merged into a single fenced lot between Vine and State streets. The period of significance for the property ranges from completion of the First Presbyterian Church building and

⁴ John Garrett, former co-owner of E.H. Garrett & Son, Gallatin, Tennessee, recalls pouring the concrete foundations for the fence sometime in the 1960s, personal communication, 2003).

⁵ The current First Presbyterian Church building was listed in the National Register in 1993 (#93000561) and is located three blocks away at North Spring Street, Murfreesboro (and outside the boundary for this nomination).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

establishment of the Presbyterian Burying Ground in 1820 through 1831 when the last known interment took place in the Presbyterian Burying Ground.

Archaeological Description

During summer 2003, archaeological testing of the Old First Presbyterian Church site was conducted by students from Middle Tennessee State University under the direction of Kevin E. Smith, Professor of Anthropology.⁶ The results (see detailed discussion in Statement of Significance) indicate that the architectural remains of the church are well preserved in the form of foundations, builders' trenches, scaffolding postholes, postholes for the church lot fence, and formal pathways. Significant numbers of artifacts associated with the Civil War use of the church have been protected from damage and metal-detecting enthusiasts by the dense deposits of brick rubble and plaster overlying the 1862-1864 occupation zone (and from the latter by its location within the cemetery lot). The unexcavated portions of the site have the documented potential to yield additional information on: a) additional architectural elements of the first brick church in Murfreesboro (and one of the earliest in Middle Tennessee); and b) an extraordinarily well preserved set of archaeological remains from a short-term Civil War field hospital in Tennessee. Additional archaeological potential exists throughout the church lot for early fences, pathways, and other major features (such as privies and trash pits).

Within the cemeteries proper, unmarked graves, vacant graveshafts from relocated civilian burials, and Civil War trenches originally used for temporary interment of soldiers represent other potential archaeological resources. While extensive archaeological investigations within the cemeteries are not feasible, non-intrusive geophysical surveying techniques such as magnetometry, ground-penetrating radar, conductivity, and resistivity have the potential to yield significant new information about subsurface features. Since these techniques do not disturb the soil, they provide an opportunity to examine the cemeteries without intruding on the integrity of interments. It is particularly likely that one or more of these techniques would yield information concerning the location of trenches used for temporary interment of soldiers following the Battle of Stones River (Stones River National Battlefield, NR 10/15/66).

Gravestones

Over 300 grave markers remain in the Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery, (although some are down, they remain intact).⁷ The earliest stones are concentrated in the

⁶ Kevin E. Smith. 2007. Archaeological Investigations at 40RD271: Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro. *Report of Archaeological Investigations No. 7*, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro. Results of the project were also the basis for a temporary Rutherford County Bicentennial museum exhibit curated by Kevin E. Smith and Michele Lawson from September 13-November 29, 2003, at the Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center titled "Two Centuries of Hallowed Ground: The Story of Murfreesborough as Told in the Old City Cemetery."

⁷ The number of known interments in the cemetery is substantially larger. Although a complete inventory of the surviving markers has not yet been completed, over 300 gravestones have been documented since 2001 as part of *The Murfreesboro Old City Cemetery Photodocumentation and Mapping Project*. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Three incomplete lists of inscriptions copied from tombstones were published in Acklen 1933 (pp. 350-352, 355-357). Other partial surveys were completed by the Works Progress Administration in 1938, Jill K. Garrett in 1968, and historic preservation students at Middle Tennessee State University in 1980. An initial compilation of individuals known to have been interred in the cemetery based on these sources was completed in 2003 (Smith 2003) and subsequently published in Daniel 2005.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number 7 Page 4

northern part of the property designated as the Presbyterian Burying Ground and date to the 1820s. The location of legible dated stones suggests that interments began to expand outside the boundaries of the church lot by the early 1830s. At least one specific burial (Lavinia Leinau Hilliard) is mentioned in the deed as already placed in the tract purchased for use as the City Cemetery.⁸

Commemorative Markers

Beginning in 1933, the property began to re-emerge as an important place on the landscape, particularly for commemorating the history and heritage of the Murfreesboro and Rutherford County. Commemorative markers are concentrated in the northwestern portion of the property on the archaeological site and are not intrusive elements in the cemeteries.

The earliest known commemorative marker placed in the Old City Cemetery was in 1933 – acknowledging the significance of the First Presbyterian Church in the history of the city and state:

D.A.R. to Unveil Marker. The Col. Hardy Murfree chapter D.A.R. will unveil a marker in the old cemetery on the spot where stood the Old Presbyterian church, that served as the capitol in 1822, the legislature meeting there in that year, while Murfreesboro was the capital of the state. Miss Lillian Jetton chairman of historical research and marking of historical spots for the chapter, is in charge of the program. Mrs. Joseph Hays Acklen, of Nashville, vice president general of National Society of D.A.R. and national chairman of historical research for the southwest division, will make an address.⁹

The monument text reads:

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MURFREESBORO was organized in April 1812 under the name of the Murfree Spring Church with eighteen members. Joseph Dickson, Mary Stewart, Elizabeth Kelton, Susanna Henry, John Smith, Margaret Dickson, Margaret Jetton, John Henry, Frances Henderson, Isabella Smith, Mary Dickson, Mrs. Samuel Wilson, Margaret Wasson, James C. Smith, William D. Baird, Grace Williams, Abigail Baird, Robert Wasson. In 1818 the name of the church was changed to the First Presbyterian Church. A brick building was erected: The Legislature sat here in 1822 during the time when Murfreesboro was the Capitol [sic] of Tennessee. The church was demolished by the federal army in 1864. This tablet is placed by the Col. Hardy Murfree Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution September 1933.

According to Jill K. Garrett,¹⁰ the first of the series of commemorative markers for Rutherford County Revolutionary War soldiers was placed in the cemetery in 1937. Samuel Wilson was buried about three miles from Murfreesboro in 1830. The original stone was moved to the Old City Cemetery by

⁸ Rutherford County Deed Book, W, 494-495.

⁹ *Daily News Journal*, Monday, October 16, 1933.

¹⁰ Jill K. Garrett, Old City Cemetery, 1968:11. Unpublished manuscript, copy in possession of author.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

the Captain William Lytle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). In 1968, all that remained of this stone was a broken piece reading "72 years here lies the brave, the virtuous, the independent and honest man _____liberty and truth." This stone was subsequently incorporated into a row of seven commemorative markers placed by the Captain William Lytle Chapter of the DAR sometime prior to 1968. Located to the right of the Vine Street entrance, the six additional markers commemorated John Bradley, Richard Keele, William Burnett, Samuel McClanahan, William Smith, and Robert Smith. The actual burial places of these individuals are unknown or were destroyed prior to the 1960s. Selection of the individuals for placement of government markers by the DAR was based largely on pension applications indicating they were residents of Rutherford County near the time of their deaths.

By the 1960s, the Old City Cemetery was in disrepair. Garrett notes that "many of the monuments are down and broken. All tall obelisk-type markers have been pushed over. There are large piles of stones scattered throughout the cemetery... Some stones are literally buried in the ground..."¹¹ On March 19, 1964, the Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists (DAC) passed and transmitted to the Mayor a resolution urging the "City Council of Murfreesboro to have the City Cemetery restored immediately and some provision made for maintenance." By June 25, Mayor W.H. Westbrook and the City Council passed a resolution supporting restoration and maintenance of the Old City Cemetery. By March 1965, it was recorded that the "City of Murfreesboro had erected a fence around the Old City Cemetery and that the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities had donated funds for the entrance."¹²

With the approach of the United States Bicentennial, the Old City Cemetery became a central focus of the city and county celebrations. In September 1975, the DAC requested that a state historical marker commemorating the First Presbyterian Church be placed in the Old City Cemetery. That marker was cast by January 1976 and a dedication ceremony was held on February 22, with Representative John Bragg providing the address.¹³

The historical marker reads:

3A 101 – STATE CAPITOL – In August 1822, a called session of the state assembly was held here in the First Presbyterian Church: the lower house met on the first floor and the senate in the gallery. It was used by the legislature as a meeting place after the county courthouse burned while Murfreesboro was the Capital. The church was destroyed by the Union Army during the Civil War.

On July 3, 1976, Mayor Westbrook presided over a United States Bicentennial Ceremony rededicating the Old City Cemetery. The ceremony included dedication of two additional markers in the Revolutionary War Soldiers row for William Cocke and Peter Jennings. These markers were

¹¹ Jill K. Garrett, Old City Cemetery, 1968:11. Unpublished manuscript, copy in possession of author.

¹² Minutes of the Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter, Daughters of the American Colonists, March 18, 1965.

¹³ Minutes of the Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter, Daughters of the American Colonists, September 15, 1975 and 1976.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

sponsored by the Colonel Hardy Murfree Chapter of the DAR. Since this time, the City of Murfreesboro, Department of Parks and Recreation has maintained the cemetery.

A single replacement gravestone made and inscribed by John Lawrence Vaughan was installed in the Old City Cemetery portion of the property in 1977. This stone replaces missing and damaged stones and is the only modern gravestone within the property boundaries. Although these commemorative elements are intrusive, they are almost exclusively restricted to the northwest corner lot where the church once stood, and are generally not intrusive in the Presbyterian Burying Ground or Old City Cemetery. A small number of unobtrusive commemorative and/or "new" markers are present in the cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery site is eligible for listing in the National Register under criteria A and D in the areas of historic archaeology, exploration/settlement, social history, and military history. Under criterion A the site is locally significant from 1820-1931 as the burial ground for a significant number of families important in the early social, economic, and political history of the region and as a place of interment for both Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. The Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery meet the requirements for criteria consideration D (cemeteries).

Criteria Consideration D (Cemetery). The Presbyterian Burying Ground is Murfreesboro's oldest burial ground, established only six years after incorporation of the town. Many of the members of the first congregation buried here were original settlers of the town and county and were instrumental in the development of many aspects of the community. The Old City Cemetery is the first official public cemetery established in 1837 and contains the mortal remains of many of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County's pioneers. In addition, elements of these cemeteries are associated with important Civil War battles, including Forrest's Raid on Murfreesborough and the Battle of Stones River. The City of Murfreesborough passed an ordinance in 1872 that effectively closed the cemeteries for further interments. The only exception was for near relatives of persons already buried there. Both areas retain historic integrity sufficient to convey their significance to the early settlement and development of Murfreesboro and to use of the cemeteries as both temporary and permanent areas for interment of Civil War soldiers.

Under criterion D, the archaeological potential of the Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery site falls into two categories of local and state significance:

- 1) Architecture and Landscape of the Church (Local Significance). The property is the only known significantly undisturbed lot within the original town plan and contains the archaeological remains of one of the first large buildings constructed within the community. As the first formal church built in Murfreesboro, further examination of the interior of the church promises to yield additional insights into how local builders implemented widely used architectural blueprints. The Murfreesboro church appears to have been inspired by Asher Benjamin plans, but is built in brick rather than the more common frame used in the northeast. Additional information on pathways, fences, plantings, and other landscape features also promises to yield new insights. While archaeological evidence of such a short term event is admittedly unlikely, the church additionally served as the State Capitol building during the 1822 legislative session, during which Andrew Jackson was nominated by resolution as a candidate for President of the United States for the controversial 1824 election.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

- 2) Short-term Field Hospital and Civil War Encampment (Statewide Significance). In the state-wide thematic study completed in 2003 by the Tennessee Division of Archaeology, the component "short-term hospital" was used a total of 33 times (West Tennessee, 5; Middle Tennessee, 15; East Tennessee, 13). As noted in the theme study "some of the sites have standing homes or other buildings that served as temporary Civil War hospitals, some retain only the archaeological remains of such buildings, and some are presumed to contain archaeological remains associated with temporary tent hospitals, which were usually established in connection with battles."¹⁴ The Old First Presbyterian Church site was not identified in the theme study, but represents what is likely to be a unique circumstance in terms of archaeological preservation and potential. Most standing buildings that were used as short term hospitals continued in use as non-military structures for decades or more. As a result, it is frequently difficult to extract the short-term military use from the longer-term uses of the structures or sites. The demolition of the church building during the Civil War and sealing of the interior of the structure with a thick layer of brick rubble and plaster has substantively preserved archaeological deposits relating to military use of the church building. In addition, the churchyard has the potential to retain other preserved features from the Civil War uses of the building (short term camps, privies, disposal pits). Because of its incorporation within the cemetery, the churchyard was never subsequently built over, disturbed, or looted by relic collectors. As noted by Smith and Nance: "Not only is there often doubt concerning the length of time that a building may have been used as a hospital, but there is often an element of folklore... and a tendency to claim that they were used for some military purpose during the Civil War whether such is supported by fact or not."¹⁵ Historic documentation for use of the church as a field hospital is quite detailed compared to other such buildings. Finally, information relevant to Civil War burial practices may be obtained from the property through the use of non-invasive geophysical surveys, including magnetometry and ground penetrating radar. This site is one of the most intact sites in the state that has the potential to yield important information about the use of Civil War encampments and hospitals.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Pre-Church Phase (1803-1819)

Rutherford County was established by the Tennessee General Assembly on October 25, 1803, from sections of Davidson, Wilson, Williamson, and Sumner counties. The first county seat was at Jefferson, a river town now partially inundated by the waters of Percy Priest Lake. By 1811, the population center of the county had shifted south to an area around Murfree Spring, which was situated on two of the principal roads of the time.

¹⁴ Samuel D. Smith and Benjamin C. Nance, 2003. *A Survey of Civil War Era Military Sites in Tennessee*, Research Series No. 14, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Nashville.

¹⁵ Samuel D. Smith and Benjamin C. Nance, 2003. *A Survey of Civil War Era Military Sites in Tennessee*, Research Series No. 14, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Nashville.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 9Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

On June 1, 1811 Reverend Robert Henderson (1764-1834) held a "camp meeting" religious service near Murfree Spring in a log schoolhouse on lands belonging to Hardy Murfree.¹⁶ Henderson was a former pupil of the famed Presbyterian scholar Samuel Witherspoon Doak in Washington County, Tennessee (at Martin Academy, later known as Washington College NR 7/17/02). About 1811, Dr. Henderson also became one of the leading lecturers at Bradley Academy in Murfreesboro, where he instructed a young James K. Polk.¹⁷

At the same time, William Lytle donated land to establish the public square of Cannonsburgh, a new town approved by the General Assembly on October 17, 1811. About a month later on November 19, the General Assembly changed the name to "Murfreesborough" (apparently) at the request of Lytle to honor his friend Hardy Murfree. More centrally located in the county than Jefferson, Murfreesborough was designated as the new county seat in 1812.

The 1811 "camp meeting" of Reverend Henderson eventually led to an official organization of the church congregation in April 1812. The "Murfree Spring Church" was organized with eighteen members and initially continued meeting in the same log schoolhouse. The founding members of the congregation included Abigail Baird, William D. Baird, Joseph Dickson, Margaret Dickson, Mary Dickson, Frances Henderson, Robert Henderson, John Henry, Susanna Henry, Margaret Jetton, Elizabeth Kelton, Isabella Smith, John Smith, Mary Stewart, Margaret Wasson, Robert Wasson, Grace Williams, and Mrs. Samuel Wilson.¹⁸ Over the next several years, services were conducted in borrowed spaces including schoolhouses and the county courthouse. As both the congregation and Murfreesborough grew, the need for a larger and more formal home for the congregation was apparent.

In 1818, this need was underlined by the designation of Murfreesborough as the capital city of the fledgling state of Tennessee. Since creation of the state in 1796, only four Tennessee cities have served as the State Capital. Knoxville was the first capital from the drafting of the state constitution and the first meeting of the General Assembly in 1796 through 1811 (although Kingston served as "capital for a day" when the General Assembly met there in 1807 to fulfill a treaty obligation made with the Cherokee Indians). From 1812-1816, the General Assembly met in Nashville, returning to Knoxville for the 1817 legislative session. From 1818-1825, Murfreesborough served as the state capital city. In 1826, the General Assembly returned to Nashville, which became the permanent state capital in 1843.¹⁹

Perhaps aligned with this momentous change in the status of Murfreesborough in 1818, Dr. Robert Henderson returned to the frontier town to resume pastoral charge of the "Murfree Spring Church." Under his leadership, the congregation became the "First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesborough" and began raising funds to build the first Murfreesborough church and what

¹⁶ Minutes of the Session I:1, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Mf. 502, First Presbyterian Church Records, Murfreesboro, 1812-1967.

¹⁷ Although the details of their meeting remain unknown, Sarah Childress, Polk's future wife, was a member of the First Presbyterian Church. Anderson Childress, her brother, became friends with Polk during their time together at Bradley Academy in Murfreesboro.

¹⁸ A number of the founders of the church were eventually interred in the Presbyterian Burying Ground, including Abigail Baird, William D. Baird, Margaret Jetton, John and Isabella Smith, Mary Stewart, Margaret Wasson, and Robert Wasson.

¹⁹ Capital Cities. *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=196>. Accessed May 28, 2011.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 10Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

(unconfirmed) oral tradition suggests was the first brick building constructed in the city.

The Presbyterian Church Phase (1820-1861)

Although no known primary historical documents detail the construction of the Old First Presbyterian Church, the project must have been initiated sometime in 1819 under the direction of Benjamin Goldson.²⁰ On April 1, 1820 William Lytle recorded the sale of a lot for one dollar to William Baird, Trustee of the First Presbyterian Church, "to promote the cause of religion & to provide a suitable place for the Society of Christians called Presbyterians on which to erect a church *and on which a church is now erected* for the worship of almighty God."²¹ This notation suggests construction was completed no later than April 1820.

According to the deed, the lot was:

on the east side of Murfreesborough on the north-east corner of Lot. No. Seventy as designated in the general plan of the town of Murfreesborough, running thence South Ten poles with the said lot to the southeast corner thereof, thence East nine poles to a stake in said Lytle's eastern boundary line of his two hundred and ten acre tract thence North ten poles with said line to a stake thence west to the beginning...²² (Figures 5-8).

To date, no drawings, sketches, photographs, or other visual images of this building have been identified, but a few written descriptions have survived.

A brick building forty by sixty ft, two storys, windows, painted shutters, three doors in front, two leading to the gallery, finishing off with a cupaloe [sic], about seventy feet high, neatly finished with painted shutters, a large golden ball on the top, a hundred and twenty five pounds bell. The inside work, a gallery on two sides and end, pannel [sic] work all round, also three rows seats round the gallery. The whole supported above and below with turned pillars, standing at proper distance apart. The lower story, all pewed, closed with doors. An elevated pulpit, about three feet from the floor, stair way either side for entrance with doors, seating three men. All well finished and neatly painted. Pews all numbered on the doors. This, the general appearance. The work of the whole building was undertaken by Benj. Goldson, at a cost of about four thousand dollars. The church was completed in 1820.²³

Historical documents and archaeological investigations suggest the meeting house was typical of a large group of churches built in the early 1800s by local builders drawing upon Asher Benjamin's widely available hand books:

²⁰ Goldson is mentioned in secondary sources as the builder, but no other information about him has been identified. He appears to have been a local builder with the plan inspired by design from the widely available multiple editions of the *American Builder's Companion* by Asher Benjamin. John C. Spence. 1991. *The Annals of Rutherford County*. Murfreesboro, Rutherford County Historical Society (vol. 1, 1799-1828; vol. 2, 1829-1870), 80.

²¹ Rutherford County Deed Book, M, 445, emphasis added.

²² Rutherford County Deed Book, M, 445.

²³ John C. Spence. 1991, 80.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 11Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Architects, so called, they had none, but with Asher Benjamin's hand books, which gave both the Vignola orders, and Benjamin's own adaptation to them for edifices of various kinds, the designers struggled along as best they could... the results were always pleasing, well adapted to the locales...²⁴

The East Avon Congregational Church (Figure 10) was built by a local builder about the same time as the First Presbyterian Church (completed 1819) drawing on Benjamin's handbooks and probably presents a very similar overall appearance.

Another issue of substance relates to the establishment of a cemetery associated with the new church. Apparently after some debate and discussion, the congregation determined to establish a church cemetery at approximately the same time the new church was completed. The cemetery was located within the original church lot and became known locally as the Presbyterian Burying Ground.

The church lot enclosed shortly after the erection of the building. Up to this time, a burying [sic] place was on the land of Mr. Dickinson, one mile from town. It was undetermined whether they would make the church lot a place of burial or not. After the matter was understood, it would be so used. A man the name of Eldridge died. He was of the class usually called saloon keepers (that day known doggery). Whiskey the cause of his death.

The question came up, should such be buried in a church lot. The authorities refused on account of his occupation. He was buried in his own ground. The matter after reconsidered, he was taken up and placed in the church lot, the first person in the old cemetery."²⁵

Archaeological investigations (see discussion following) place the church building on the northwest corner of the church lot. Family plots associated with members of the church and 1820s death dates on surviving monuments indicate the "Presbyterian Burying Ground" was located to the south and east of the church building (Figure 4).

1822 Legislative Session

On April 22, 1822, Governor William Carroll issued a proclamation invoking Article 2, Section 9 of the State Constitution to call for an "extraordinary session" of the General Assembly.²⁶ The special

²⁴ Aymar Embury II, "Early American Churches Part VIII," *The Architectural Record* 32(1):80-90. 1912.

²⁵ Spence 1991, 178.

²⁶ Few Murfreesboro newspapers survive from this time period, so it is necessary to look for evidence further afield. Reprinting verbatim has occasionally led to confusion over the dates of the courthouse fire. For example, on August 15, 1822 the *Baltimore Patriot* reprinted the statement "The Court-House in Murfreesborough was consumed by fire on Thursday morning last" -- suggesting a date of August 8. However, this is simply a verbatim reprinting of an earlier newspaper edition in Tennessee. *Knoxville Register*, May 7, 1822. The Tennessee General Assembly frequently only held a single session during the early nineteenth century. Although in most respects this meeting constituted simply the second session of the 14th General Assembly, the designation of "extraordinary" was required because the meeting was held at a date earlier than the September date mandated in the Tennessee Constitution. Carroll did not specify the precise reason except to that: "a just regard for the interests of the good people of the State, seems to require that the General Assembly should be convened at a day earlier than that on which by the constitution they would meet in regular session."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 12Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

session convened in Murfreesborough on Monday, July 22. Although the date cannot be established with surviving documents, the Murfreesboro log courthouse burned either on July 11 or July 18, 1822 -- leaving the Tennessee General Assembly without a meeting place.²⁷ Rumors of the time implicated anti-Jacksonian politics in the mysterious fire: "We did not hear how it is supposed to have caught, but as there is no fire kept in the house, in the absence of information, we would conjecture that it was the act of a wicked, designing incendiary."²⁸ Regardless of the origins of the fire, the new First Presbyterian Church building was converted to serve as the State Capitol building for this legislative session. From July 22 through August 24, 1822, the Senate met on the second level and the House of Representatives on the first:

...at this time, the new Presbyterian Church, a two story brick building, large, with a gallery two sides and end, easy access, the pews removed, a floor laid across the open space in the gallery, the work of a short time. When completed, in all respects, making a more convenient place for the meeting of the Legislature than the court house, the former place. Tables and chairs were furnished. By this arrangement, no time lost. The Assembly [sic] met the regular time allotted for meeting. Business commenced and carried on to the close in regular manner as if nothing had happened to retard the movement.²⁹

Although efforts had been mustered to seek funding for a new brick county courthouse to replace the older log building for several years prior to 1822, they had not yet come to fruition. Instead, conversion of the church building as a place to house the General Assembly in 1822 was apparently funded largely by the church congregation.

The group assembled in the First Presbyterian Church during July and August of 1822 included an impressive list of politicians with lasting impact on the state and nation. Future President James K. Polk, having graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, served as clerk of the Senate that session -- alongside Felix Grundy, his mentor in the legal profession, and Aaron Venable Brown, his law partner and future Tennessee governor (1845-47). Although Tennessee's nickname as the "Volunteer State" apparently originated in regard to volunteerism that took place during the War of 1812, the reputation was forever solidified during Brown's tenure as governor. Brown's call for 2,600 volunteers in support of the Mexican-American War resulted in 30,000 Tennesseans responding. Many of the other members of the 14th General Assembly are well known in the history of the state and the nation, including David Crockett and William Hall (Governor 1829).

One motivation for calling an early "special" session of the legislature may have been nomination of General Andrew Jackson for the presidential election of 1824. By this point, the system for nominating a presidential candidate was largely controlled by the then vastly dominant Democratic-Republican party -- dubbed "King Caucus" by its critics. Resolutions passed by the state legislature in 1822 were perhaps an effort to influence the increasingly disreputable presidential nomination

²⁷ *Knoxville Register*, July 23, 1822.

²⁸ *Knoxville Register*, July 23, 1822

²⁹ Spence 1991,192.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

system. On July 28, 1822 the House of Representatives recorded the following resolution:

The members of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, taking into review, the great importance of the selection of a suitable person to fill the Presidential chair, at the approaching election for the chief magistracy of the United States, and seeing that those who achieved our independence and laid the foundations of the American Republic, have nearly passed away; and believing that moral worth, political acquirements, and decision of character, should unite in the individual who may be called to preside over the people of the United States, have turned their eyes to ANDREW JACKSON, late Major General of the armies of the United States; In him they behold the soldier, the statesman, and the honest man; he deliberates, he decides, and he acts; he is calm in deliberation, cautious in decision, efficient in action. Such a man we are willing to aid in electing to the highest office in the gift of a free people. The welfare of a country may be safely entrusted to the hands of him who has experienced every privation, and encountered every danger, to promote its safety, its honor and its glory; Therefore, Resolved as the opinion of the members composing the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, That the name of Maj. Gen. ANDREW JACKSON, be submitted to the consideration of the people of the United States at the approaching election for the Chief Magistracy.³⁰

As recorded by Sam Houston in a letter to Jackson dated August 3, 1822: Dear Genl: On this day a resolution has passed the Senate (unanimously) recommending you as a person the most worthy, & suitable to be the next president of our union. The expression cannot be esteemed by you anything less than a grateful and honorable expression of the feelings of your fellow Citizens...³¹

Andrew Jackson did not attend this momentous event in the First Presbyterian Church for personal and political reasons. On August 6, 1822, he wrote to his nephew Andrew Jackson Donelson:

I did not visit Murfreesborough as was anticipated, nor do I intend; casually, it being hinted to me, that it was intended by some of my friends to bring my name before the nation, as a fit person to fill the presidential chair, by a resolution of the Legislature, I declined going to the legislature at all, well knowing if I did, that it would be said by my enemies, that such a resolution was produced by my procurement - & never having been a applicant for any office I have filled, and having long since determined that I never would, I intend in the present instance to pursue the same independent, republican course. The people have the right to elect whom they think proper – and every individual composing the republic, when the people require his services, is bound to render it, regardless of his own opinion, of his unfitness for the office he is called to fill – I have recd many letters from every quarter of the United States on this subject; I have answered none, nor do I intend to answer any. I shall leave the people free to adopt

³⁰ *Knoxville Register*, August 6, 1822.

³¹ Harold D. Moser, David R. Hoth, and George H. Hoemann (eds), *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, Volume 5, 1821-1824*. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville. 1996, 211-212.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

such course as they may think proper, & elect whom they choose, to fill the Presidential chair, without any influence of mine exercised by me...

...But as the legislature of my state has thought proper to bring my name forward without consulting me, I mean to be silent – and let the people do as it seemeth good to them – My enemies had at the city of Washington circulated the report that I had no popularity in my own state, the resolution of the Legislature, will inform the nation with how much truth this has been circulated – and I suppose this, with other reasons, prompted the move to bring it forward, and has determined me to be silent...³²

These resolutions resulted in one of the most contentious presidential races of national history. In the 1824 campaign, Jackson faced three candidates: John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State; Henry Clay, Speaker of the House; and William Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury. Jackson won both the popular vote and the electoral vote – but did not have the requisite majority (50%) in the Electoral College.³³ With the electoral vote split among three candidates (Jackson, Clay, and Adams), the US House of Representatives was left to determine the outcome of the election. Clay endorsed Adams, who was duly selected by the House as President. President Adams then appointed Clay as his Secretary of State. Jackson and his supporters were furious and charged that there had been a “corrupt bargain” that violated the will of the voters. In 1828, Jackson and his supporters used the “corrupt bargain” in the campaign against Adams, easily defeating him. In his 1832 re-election campaign, Jackson defeated Clay, the other candidate from the 1824 race.

After use by the General Assembly in July and August, repairs were necessary in October 1822:

A meeting was held for the purpose of consulting the most suitable means for having our house of worship kept. It was resolved that each pew holder pay annually one dollar, to a committee to be appointed for the purpose of keeping the house repaired.³⁴

Additional records indicate substantial repairs to the church in 1826 and again in 1838:

Resolved that Mr. Jonathan Currin Treasurer be requested to have the floor of our house of worship raised and certain other repairs done to it...³⁵

And also to Samuel H. Hodge and David D. Wendel in about the sum of three hundred dollars, which the said Sam H. and David W. had paid and were still bound bound [sic] to pay for repairs of the [illegible] regular house of worship in the year of 1838...³⁶

³² Moser et al. 1996, 212-214

³³ It should be noted, however, that some scholars have argued that the 1824 election has a “weak claim” to being the first election in which the candidate who obtained the popular vote failed to be elected president. Critics note that six of the twenty four states at the time did not conduct popular elections, choosing their Electors instead in the state legislature. Several of those states (including New York) would probably have yielded large popular majorities for Adams. William C. Kimberling *The Electoral College*, 1992. http://www.fec.gov/pdf/elec_coll.pdf. Accessed September 23, 2011.

³⁴ MF502, Minutes of the Session, October 1822, 3.

³⁵ MF502, Minutes of the Session, September 1, 1826.

³⁶ MF 502, Abstract of Deeds.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 15Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

These records of repairs provide important clues to interpret some of the archaeological finds of 2003.

Expansion of the Presbyterian Burying Ground as the First "City Cemetery"

Because it was established on the relatively small church lot, the Presbyterian Burying Ground was soon inadequate to meet congregational and community needs. Although it sufficed for more than fifteen years as a place of interment for the church congregation and some others, the growth of Murfreesborough soon created a need for a "public cemetery." In December 1837, Mayor Henderson Yoakum and the Aldermen purchased an approximately three-acre tract east and south of the Presbyterian Burial ground to establish the first public "city cemetery" of Murfreesborough. The deed registered on December 28, 1837, conveys a tract from Mary M. Hilliard "to the Corporation of Murfreesboro' for the purpose of being used as a Burying ground and for no other purpose."³⁷ At least one person had already been buried on the tract south of the Presbyterian Burying Ground, since the same deed notes: "reserving however a space of twenty five feet square the same being marked off immediately around the grave of Lavinia M. Leinau deceased which is not here intended to be conveyed."

Although the "Old City Cemetery" is now bounded on the north by East Vine Street and on the south by East State Street, the land conveyed by Mary Hilliard for the "burying ground" extended south of those current boundaries. In 1837, neither Sevier Street nor State Street had been extended east of the Presbyterian Church lot. While surviving documents provide few direct clues, the surviving tombstones in the Old City Cemetery suggest that the City Cemetery expanded from north to south – with some interments nearing what is now State Street by the late 1850s. The 1878 Beers Map of Murfreesboro provides the most direct evidence that the original "City Cemetery" extended approximately half a block further south (Figures 5-6).

Surviving stones in the Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery mark the final resting place of many of the earliest settlers of the region: According to the United States Census of 1810, there were many peoples settled in the area. The Jettons, Andersons, Killoughs, Subletts, Huggins, Burtons, Dicksons, Ruckers, Bairds, and Rankins were established families before 1810. The Maney's appeared in the 1820 census. All of these families are interred in the Old City Cemetery.³⁸

Although not comprehensive, the following examples illustrate the themes of Settlement and Social History of early Murfreesboro and Rutherford County as preserved in the Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery:³⁹

1. Jetton family plot (Photograph #12). Contains eleven markers including John L. Jetton, who settled in 1803; his brother and sister-in-law Robert and Nancy Wilson Jetton, who came in 1806. Robert formed Captain Jetton's troop in the War of 1812, later participated

³⁷ Rutherford County Deed Book, W, 494-495.

³⁸ Mary H. Wilgus, "Murfreesboro's Old City Cemetery: A Record of the Past," Rutherford County Historical Society Publication, 17, 53-76. 1981.

³⁹ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 16Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

- in the first Seminole Expedition, 1817-1818, and served in both the Tennessee House (1817-21) and Senate (1823-5, 1831-3).
2. Childress family plot (Photograph #24). Anderson Childress (1799-1827), classmate and friend of James K. Polk and brother of Sarah Childress Polk is interred early in the history of the Presbyterian Burying Ground, along with a number of relatives.
 3. Anderson family plot. Samuel (1764-1842) and Elizabeth Burras Anderson settled in Rutherford County in 1810. Samuel represented Rutherford County in the 1834 Tennessee Constitutional Convention and served as judge in the Fifth Judicial Circuit from 1835-1851.
 4. Killough family plot. Samuel and Mary Killough came to the county in 1804 and became a prosperous plantation owner.
 5. George A. Sublett (1792-1855). The cemetery contains the grave of Murfreesboro's first newspaper owner and editor. George and his brother A.C. Sublett printed their first newspaper, the *Courier*, on 16 June 1814, followed by the *Murfreesborough Courier* sometime between 1824 and 1827, and finally the *National Vidette*.
 6. Huggins family plot. The Huggins family, including William and Mary Elizabeth settled in the county in 1807 and represent some of earliest general store owners of the city.
 7. Burton family plot (Photograph #15, 16). Frank N.W. Burton (1779-1843) married Lavinia B. Murfree (1795-1881), Colonel Hardy Murfree's daughter. Frank was a founder, board member, and trustee of Soule's Female Academy, begun in 1825. Hardy Murfree Burton, their son, was also interred in the family plot after serving as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee in 1848 and one of the incorporators of the Murfreesborough Savings Institute in 1850.
 8. Maney family plot (Photograph #4). A prominent doctor, plantation owner, and businessman, Dr. James Maney (1790-1872) married Sallie H. Murfree (1793-1857), another daughter of Colonel Hardy Murfree and settled in Murfreesboro. James, Sallie and many of their descendants are interred in the family plot beneath the large tree in the Old City Cemetery.
 9. Baird family plot (Photograph #20). Among the founders of the First Presbyterian Church, William and Abigail Baird are interred in the Presbyterian Burying Ground just south of the church.

Many other families important in the beginnings of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County also found their final resting place in the Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery.

The Church During the Civil War (1862-1864)

The experience of the Civil War in Middle Tennessee was distinct from that of many other parts of the southern United States. While many regions experienced major battles like that of Stones River, the lengthy occupation of Middle Tennessee by Federal forces from early in the war changed the face and landscape of the town forever. While virtually every aspect of daily life was affected during this period, churches and their congregations were among the many institutions especially affected by Federal occupation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

An early history of the First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro compiled and edited by Annie E. Campbell about 1939 provides a poignant expression of the experience of the congregation early in the Civil War:

An incident related by the late Mrs. Lizzie Miller Jones, a lifelong citizen of this county, gives an idea of the spirit of the times. She writes: I attended a service there [in the First Presbyterian Church] when Dr. Eagleton preached a funeral sermon for Confederate soldiers who died at Camp Trousdale. During the service a runner came up the aisle and handed Dr. Eagleton a note. He read it and said "Dear Friends, Fort Donelson has fallen." I will never forget the look of sorrow on his face. Then we knew what war was. When the enemy came the church in which we were that day was broken into, the sacrament vessels taken away, and the building made into a stable...⁴⁰

After the Federal occupation of Middle Tennessee, large gatherings of citizens were generally restricted – including church congregations. The diary of Kate Carney⁴¹ records some of the hardships of the local congregations during the occupation of Murfreesboro:

Friday, May 16th 1862. Today was the Fast day appointed by Jeff Davis, and we kept it until dinner, though we had no service in our churches. It seems hard that we are not permitted to pray to God, when and how we want to.

Sunday, May 25 1862. A bright & beautiful day. I accompanied Cousin Ann & Bettie to the Presbyterian church, before we got to church met Jimmie Leiper, who said one of their Regt's had been ordered off. Just after service began, the Yanks got up and left. I was glad Mr. Eagleton reproved them, though I've heard since they received marching orders & had to leave all the churches.⁴²

Sunday, June 22, 1862. No service except at the Baptist church, & Mr. Pendleton is a Union man.

The Church building itself, the Presbyterian Burying Ground, and the City Cemetery were strongly affected by the war as well. Early in the conflict for control of Middle Tennessee, parts of the City Cemetery were used for the interment of soldiers. The earliest documented interments took place after the brief recapture of Murfreesboro by Confederate troops under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest on July 18, 1862. Robert Franklin Bunting indicates that the graves of both Union and Confederate soldiers were present:

Whilst there [at Murfreesboro] I visited the village graveyard at the O.S. Presbyterian Church, where the soldiers of both armies are buried. There quietly sleep twenty-four who fell in Forrest's Command on the 13th of July. In one place our own killed lay side

⁴⁰ MF 502, Campbell history, 9. Presumably the event described took place on or after Sunday, February 16, 1862, when Fort Donelson was surrendered.

⁴¹ Kate S. Carney Diary #139-z, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

⁴² Reverend William Eagleton served as pastor of the church for more than 40 years.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

by side, and on the right the two which have since died... Yet, whenever that hallowed spot is visited by the citizens of Murfreesboro,' though they may be strangers and they read those names, their hearts bounding with gratitude to God, and their eyes flowing with tears, they will say 'These are the gallant men who fell in rescuing our homes and our altars from the invader, and delivered our city from the oppressive rule of our cruel and heartless enemy.⁴³

Mrs. L.D. Whitson also records the interment of a Confederate soldier following Forrest's Raid:

There was a Texas Ranger [Thomas Monks?] who was wounded in the charge on the courthouse, and who lingered, and died, and was buried in the city cemetery, just one week to the day Forrest captured Murfreesboro.⁴⁴

In his official report to Major General George Thomas on September 1, 1867, Chaplain William Earnshaw of the United States Army (in charge of establishing the National Cemetery at Stones River) noted retrieval of the bodies of Union soldiers from the City Cemetery:

...we proceeded to the City Cemetery in rear of Presbyterian Church and gathered all [Union soldiers] that were there interred. Many of these died of wounds received in the battle when Rebel Genl Forrest recaptured the place in 1862.⁴⁵

Whether the church was used as a temporary "field hospital" at the time of Forrest's Raid is unclear, since short-term informal uses of buildings are not well documented in official records. However, no currently known documents indicate that the church congregation was able to meet in the building after May 1862.

By the evening of December 29, 1862, the church had been put into service as a field hospital for Union soldiers. C. Lewis Diehl, soldier in the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry of the Federal army, was injured the morning of Monday, December 29 in a skirmish preceding the main Battle of Stones River. He was initially treated for a gunshot to the face at a farmhouse and later transported with his comrades Weiler and Eaton to the First Presbyterian Church.

I was that night [Monday, December 29] the **first occupant** of the old Presbyterian Church, which on the Wednesday following was filled with wounded rebels and a few union soldiers. Weiler and Eaton who had been placed on cots in tents, were brought in on the following day, the pews having been removed, and straw mattresses provided on the floor for the reception of the wounded. Eaton died at 5 o'clock A.M., January 1st, 1863. One of the nurses handed me some trifles of trinkets, a memorandum book, etc., which I had the sad pleasure afterwards of placing in the hands of his sister. I had requested the nurse to see that the grave was marked so that it could be identified, giving him sufficient money to meet the expense of a rude headboard; but so far as I

⁴³ [Houston] *Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, October 27, 1862. Letter from the Rangers, Near Nashville, Tenn. September 29, 1862. Robert Franklin Bunting

⁴⁴ *Gilbert St. Maurice*, by Mrs. L. D. Whitson. Published for the author, Tavel, Eastman, & Howell. Nashville. 1874, 98.

⁴⁵ National Archives Record Group 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, 1774-1985.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 19Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

know, poor Eaton's grave has never been found. As well treated in this hospital as could be expected with the limited supplies at hand, the union contingent passed an anxious week - on Wednesday is despair, by Saturday with the assurance that victory was on our side. Soon I was able to walk into town, and, while with the advent of our forces the hospital supplies were materially improved, I was anxious to be again with my regiment.⁴⁶

Centering along the Nashville-Chattanooga railroad three miles to the northwest of Murfreesboro, the larger Battle of Stones River began at dawn on Wednesday, December 31, 1862 and involved about 81,000 soldiers. By the end of the battle on January 2, 1863, the two armies had sustained nearly 24,000 casualties (relatively evenly distributed on both sides) with over 3,000 killed outright.

The impacts of the enormous numbers of casualties on the local community can be measured in many ways, but population figures from the 1860 census offer one simple means of comparison: Murfreesboro total population 1860: 3,861; Rutherford County total population 1860: 23, 917. Hence the number of dead nearly equaled the total population of Murfreesboro, while the number of casualties approximates the total population of Rutherford County. As a result, most of the buildings in Murfreesboro were put into service as field hospitals for the rapidly growing numbers of wounded. Already in use as a small-scale temporary hospital, the First Presbyterian Church was quickly put into service by medical personnel from both armies.

Lewis Diehl, still in the hospital noted that: "The wounded have been coming in numbers into this church (at Murfreesboro) in which I was the first occupant. It is a terrible sight."⁴⁷ Spence also documents the impacts on churches through use as hospitals.⁴⁸

January 4, 1863. The three college buildings were used as hospitals, all the churches, several of the [business] store rooms, and several large dwelling houses. The seats out of the churches and shelving and counters out of the store rooms...

January 5, 1863. There were large numbers of wounded lying on the field to collect. Ambulances were busy running for the wounded. They commence fitting hospitals in a better manner for accommodation of the wounded. The confederate army opened a number of hospitals. They had no bunks. The best they could do was to procure clean straw, lay some on the floor, spread a blanket, lay the patient down and cover with other blankets. In this way they lay in rows over the floors. Had been filling the hospitals with both classes of soldiers, up to the time of the retreat. Their stock of medicines was on a limited scale, and, of course, could not do justice to the soldier that necessity required. Confederate surgeons were left behind with their wounded men.

January 6, 1863. ... the hospitals were all being filled with the soldiers of both armys [sic].

⁴⁶ "From Carlisle to Murfreesboro: Reminiscences of a Private of Company L.," C. Lewis Diehl, pp. 34-42. In *A Short Account of the 23rd Annual Banquet of the Society of the 15th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry* by John F. Conaway. Philadelphia, 1896.

⁴⁷ Diehl 1906:134

⁴⁸ Spence 1993:64-65, 70.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 20

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Surgeons still very busy, amputating arms and legs and bandaging shot wounds of soldiers...⁴⁹

On Wednesday, January 7, Lewis Diehl wrote from the Presbyterian Church:

The United States Commissariat supplied this hospital with stores today [January 7]. The weather has been cool.... The hospital in which we are is an old Presbyterian Church and might be made very comfortable, but as it is we have nothing except straw ticks to lay on and a thin blanket for cover, with corn fodder for a pillow. The surgeons (rebel) treat us very kindly and are doing as much for us as they do for their own men. The ladies (rebel) who visit this hospital generally slight us. Some few will attend to our wants. There was a general apprehension by the rebels that our men would not treat them kindly; but since they have received our stores, with permission to help themselves to whatever they need, they think differently.⁵⁰

James T. Searcy, soldier in the Lumsden's Battery of the Confederate army and later a medical doctor, volunteered and was given permission to remain in Murfreesboro and help tend his wounded brother and other Confederate casualties at the church.

(My brother) Reuben died ... Wednesday morning [January 7] after a week and night of intense suffering... we buried him ... [Thursday] morning in the Church yard of the old School Presbyterian Church. I have the spot well marked. A head stone with his name deeply cut in it.⁵¹

While we are not certain that it is the original, a headstone with Reuben's name deeply cut in, it remains in the Old City Cemetery today (Photo #14).

An unknown number of soldiers passed through the church hospital -- some recovered, but others died from their wounds or infection. Some of these soldiers -- more than 500 by most estimates -- were temporarily or permanently interred in the cemetery behind the church. Precisely how long the church remained in use as a field hospital is difficult to determine from the surviving records, but it appears that it was probably only used for a few months after the Battle of Stones River. Two or three of the Murfreesboro churches were back in operation by March 1863 (but not the First Presbyterian Church):

March 25, 1863... Two or three of the churches have been cleared of the wounded, having been used as hospitals. They were cleaned and seats replaced and ready for church service. This brings the first opportunity for a thing of the kind for three months past.⁵²

⁴⁹ Spence 1993, 64-65, 70.

⁵⁰ "Among the Killed and Wounded at Stone River," C. Lewis Diehl pp. 129-136 in Charles H. Kirk, editor and Compiler. *History of the Fifteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry which was recruited and known as the Anderson cavalry in the rebellion of 1861-1865*. Philadelphia, 1906.

⁵¹ Elebash, Maxwell. "When Shall Our Cup Be Full?": The Correspondence of Confederate Soldiers James T. and Reuben M. Searcy. *Alabama Heritage* 31 (Winter 1994): 28-39.

⁵² Spence 1993, 83.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

For the remainder of 1863, the more than forty-year old church building seems to have continued in use as a Union supply warehouse and perhaps even as a stable.⁵³ The building was never again used as a church.

The winter of 1863-1864 was a harsh one for civilians and soldiers alike. Thousands of soldiers barracked in camps in and around Murfreesboro lived in relatively ephemeral huts and tents. Records from across the nation indicate that this winter was a time of severe and highly unpredictable weather. In Minnesota, killing frosts were recorded as early as July and August 1863 and temperatures sank as much as 25 degrees below average in the winter months. In his diary entries for the winter of 1863-1864 in Murfreesboro, John Spence records:

November 30, 1863. The thermometer this morning ranges at 17 degrees. So far, the coldest weather we have had for the last three years. Is generally anticipated that we shall have a very cold winter⁵⁴

December 15, 1863. We are now having quite a cold spell of weather. The Thermometer has been down as low as 18 degrees⁵⁵

January 1, 1864. Last night we had a very remarkable change in the weather... by morning the Thermometer was down to three degrees above zero, a change of 52 degrees in the course of twelve hours. Several soldiers froze to death on the cars on the Chattanooga road, exposed in the box cars... understood that this change was the same all over the U. States. At the north it was more intense, the Ther[mometer] at some places, as low as forty degrees below zero...⁵⁶

While the precise date and details of the destruction of the Old First Presbyterian Church building may never be known, sometime between late 1863 and March 1864, the building was demolished. Oral tradition and limited documentary evidence suggest that the building was dismantled by the Federal army and "contrabands" seeking brick to improve temporary housing during this harsh winter. As noted by Ernest Hooper "there is conflicting testimony on whether the soldiers began taking the bricks to building chimneys and huts or whether the army officially ordered the building torn down and the materials used for government purposes."⁵⁷ As the church minutes record only July 18, 1864:

July 18th Session met, & was opened with prayer. Present Rev. Mr. Eagleton & Messrs. James Maney & J.M. Baird.

⁵³ Although the use of southern buildings as "stables" by the Union Army is a frequent apocryphal part of Civil War era oral tradition, the recovery of a horseshoe by archaeologists beneath demolition rubble in the interior of the church suggests that there may be some validity to this story with reference to the church.

⁵⁴ Spence 1993,117.

⁵⁵ Spence 1993,117.

⁵⁶ Spence 1993,122-123.

⁵⁷ Ernest Hooper, 1980. "First Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee: The First Century." *Rutherford County Historical Society Publication* 14, pp. 1-32. Murfreesboro.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 22

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

The Session deem it suitable to record, that since their last meeting, which was on the 2d day of Jan. 1862, many sad events have transpired in our midst & around us, which in adoring submission to the will of God we do sincerely deplore.

1. Our surroundings during a portion of the time were of such a character that we could not have access to the house of God.
2. The health of our Pastor was such that he was under the sad necessity of leaving home & being absent 16 months & upwards.
3. There has been an unprecedented destruction of property both private & public; & even the resting-place of the dead, where the remains of many dear, loved ones were deposited, & the Sanctuary itself, where we & many of the venerated dead had been accustomed to meet for the worship of God, have been & still are desolated & desecrated!

Joseph Nelson records the destruction of the church in a letter of June 21, 1866.⁵⁸

Our town & county have been greatly darnaged by the two Armies, they distroed all the tember for miles around burnt all the rails for 3 or 4 miles in all directions burnt & pulled down at least 50 houses in town & of the number was the Old Presbyterian Church, destroyed the fence around the graves broke tombstones & desscerated the grave yard generally⁵⁹

Whitson provides a seeming eyewitness observation of the destruction of the church sometime prior to Hood's "raid on Tennessee" in November 1864:

One morning, during Hood's raid in Tennessee, we were startled to hear, it seemed all at one time, about twenty axes strike our fence. The snow covered the ground, and was hard frozen, and it was intensely cold. We looked out the window, and the Yankees had fallen to work to dispossess us of our high, thick, plank fence which shut in one side of our lot; but they never stopped until they had gone the entire rounds of the premises, and hauled away our fence in wagons to assist Father Abraham's soldiers to cook some chickens they had stolen from the citizens. A gentleman who was in the house, went out and remonstrated with the captain, for which he was told if he said a word, he would tear down the house, which these valiant warriors were quite capable of doing; for we had seen them, not long before, pull down the Presbyterian church to burn, and many times they burned the graveyard fence, which was sanctioned and approved by those in command.⁶⁰

The destruction of the church building, interment of soldiers in the cemetery, and vandalism mark

⁵⁸ Rather than inserting a number of "sic" notations for alternative spellings in this text that would break the flow of reading, spelling in this quotation is retained from the original.

⁵⁹ Joseph Nelson to N.L. Douglass, Murfreesboro, June 21, 1866. Transcribed by Shirley Jones and published in 1994 as "A Letter to Texas" in "The Civil War in Middle Tennessee," *Rutherford County Historical Society Publication* 37, 8-9. Murfreesboro.

⁶⁰ *Gilbert St. Maurice*, by Mrs. L. D. Whitson. Published for the author, Tavel, Eastman, & Howell. Nashville. 1874, 235-6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 23Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

the end of the Church Phase of the property.

Post-Church Historic Phase (1865-1931)

Left without a church home for the first time in nearly half a century, the congregation began a lengthy effort to seek restitution for destruction of the building. On October 9, 1865, Reverend William Eagleton and the elders of the First Presbyterian Church petitioned Major General George M. Thomas for restitution in the amount of \$10,000. Affidavits submitted with the petition stated that the church had been used as a hospital, commissary, and barracks – and was destroyed while under control of the Union Army.⁶¹

The petition was referred to Captain E.B. Whitman, Chief Quartermaster for the District of Middle Tennessee, who submitted his report on December 28, 1865. Whitman concluded that although woodwork had been removed by soldiers and citizens while the building was in use by the Army, the structure itself had later collapsed of its own weight or been blown down. He also noted that bricks had been taken by “soldiers to build chimneys, and that citizens and officers of the Society removed others.” Whitman added that the post commander, Brigadier General Horatio Van Cleve, “constantly used every effort in his power to protect and preserve it from ruin.”

However, the critical factor in rejecting the claim was the issue of loyalty. Whitman argued that most of those who signed the affidavits were “avowed rebels, or secret sympathizers” and hence the congregation did not qualify for compensation. The Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington concurred with the determination. As recorded by Whitson:

It was one of the hallucinations of the presiding dignity at Murfreesboro, that every man, woman, and child, was carrying on a clandestine correspondence with the Rebel army, and giving "aid and information" to those in authority.⁶²

Meanwhile, the trustees of the First Presbyterian Church proceeded with rebuilding. A new lot was purchased in 1867 on the corner of College and Spring streets and construction of a new church commenced. The services of J.V. Kiddell, architect, of Nashville were secured and in August 1867 work was commenced. The cornerstone was laid on the 10th of September, 1867, and on the 4th of October, 1868 the church was dedicated to the worship of God.⁶³

Reading between the lines, it is surmised that in 1865 both the church congregation and the officials of Murfreesboro felt that the once hallowed ground on East Vine Street now held too many bitter memories to rebuild in that vicinity. The First Presbyterian Church building was now only a mound of brick rubble, stone, and fragments of shattered windows. Union and Confederate dead were removed from their resting places in the “Murfreesboro Cemetery” and relocated to memorial cemeteries between 1865 and 1867 – undoubtedly leaving the City Cemetery and Presbyterian Burial Ground dotted and pocked with reminders of the conflict and occupation.

⁶¹ Congressional Jurisdiction Case 6575, Presbyterian Church v. United States, Record Group 123, National Archives, Washington D.C.

⁶² *Gilbert St. Maurice*, by Mrs. L. D. Whitson. Published for the author, Tavel, Eastman, & Howell. Nashville. 1874, 170.

⁶³ MF502, Campbell history 1939:13.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 24

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

In 1867, the elders of the Presbyterian Church subsequently sold burial plots in the lot where the church formerly stood and in an area extending to the southwest.

The undersigned Elders of the Presbyterian Church in the town of Murfreesboro Rutherford County Tennessee on the 10th day of July 1867 sold at public sale ... various parcels of ground as hereinafter stated and which parcels are designed by numbers on the plat which heads this Deed... The parcels sold are parts of the lot of ground in sd town of Murfreesboro Tenn. On which the Presbyterian Church was situated (the church building have been destroyed) said lot of ground on which said church building was situated a plat of which heads this deed is bounded on the west by John McKinleys lot and north by Academy Street and South & East by the grave yard.⁶⁴

Although the deed reads bounded on the "north by Academy Street," this is clearly in error – it should read "north by Vine Street." Lot No. 1 was sold to Benjamin Smith, whose obelisk located just south of the church lot records his death at the age of 77 years on February 22, 1882. The surviving monuments and archaeological investigations both suggest that the burial plots in the southwest extension of the sale in 1867 were probably used, but that those within the square of the church lot proper were not. Although no surviving records document it, it is suspected that the "new city cemetery" (Evergreen Cemetery) was probably chosen as the place of final rest for most of the individuals that originally planned interment at the Old City Cemetery. Without assurance of restitution of funds by the government to construct a new church, this sale of plots was almost certainly another venue for the congregation to solicit funds for a new church building.

In homage to Reverend William Eagleton in 1867, the following was recorded concerning the destruction of the church building:

His church passed through severe trials. Early in the war it fell within the Federal lines. Its people, in common with others in that region, were subjected to such contemptible annoyances as the malignant ingenuity of petty officials could devise; forbidden even to purchase the necessities of life unless they first took a detested oath to which few could subscribe without perjury. Their pastor was driven away from them; their house of worship was utterly destroyed. We think it literally true that the United States troops left not one brick upon another, so thorough was its demolition.⁶⁵

In February 1872, undaunted by the decision of the Quartermaster General, the Session and Diaconate addressed a petition to Congress denying that the building was burned or ruthlessly destroyed, insisting that it was used to care for sick and wounded Federal soldiers, and that later the materials from the church were used for the comfort and benefit of the army. The petition also insisted that "neither Minister, Elders, Deacons nor any communicants... held office or bore arms in the service of the Confederate Government." Attached was a six page set of specifications for a

⁶⁴Rutherford County Deed Book 23, pp. 356-357

⁶⁵ Pg. 432. The Presbyterian Historical Almanac and Annual Remembrancer of the Church for 1867. Joseph M. Wilson. Volume Nine. Philadelphia , Joseph M. Wilson.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 25Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

church building "...in all respects the same as the one occupied by the Presbyterian Congregation up to the late War." John Morgan Bright, representative from Tennessee in the United States Congress introduced the bill (H.R. 2377; Figure 9) making an appropriation for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church which was read a first and second time, referred to the Committee of Claims and order to be printed.⁶⁶ Although this first bill was unsuccessful, other bills were repeatedly introduced by Tennessee legislators over the following decades, including at least 1876, 1886, 1893, and 1898.⁶⁷ On August 27-28, 1890, and again on September 14, 1891, depositions were taken in Murfreesboro for the Court of Appeals. A final bill (S. 4058) was introduced Senator William Brimage Bate from Tennessee in 1897.⁶⁸ On March 23, 1898 the Court of Claims reported to the Committee on War Claims that it could find no evidence of disloyalty by the congregation. Thirty-five years after the destruction of the church building, a claims bill was passed on March 3, 1899 authorized payment of \$6500 "to the elders of the Presbyterian Church at Murfreesboro."⁶⁹

The Minutes of the Session for July 26, 1899 record the receipt of funds from the United States Government:

The Moderator stated that the business before the joind [sic] body was to receive the report of the committee appointed to formulate a plan for the disbursement of the money recently received from the United States Government for damages in destroying the old Church building by the United States Army during the Civil War, which amounted to \$4550 net proceeds.⁷⁰

After almost thirty years of efforts, the congregation finally received compensation for the destruction of their first church home.

The years immediately following the Civil War also saw the transformation of the "City Cemetery" to the "Old City Cemetery" – and the merging of the Presbyterian Burying Ground and church lot with the same name.

In 1866 and 1867, the streets of Murfreesboro must have been full of carts and wagons carrying the honored dead – disinterred from their temporary graves to their final resting places. Initial reports in 1865 indicate about 300 Union soldiers remained in the City Cemetery

7th At and near Murfreesboro, there are several collections of graves containing from

⁶⁶ *The Congressional Globe containing the Debates and Proceedings of the Second Session Forty-Second Congress with an Appendix embracing the Laws Passed at that Session* by F. & J. Rives and George A. Bailey. City of Washington: Office of the Congressional Globe, 1872. : In Six Parts. Part III, Congressional Globe. April 23, 1872, 2686.

⁶⁷ Although not specifically cited, Hooper 1980:26 indicates bills were introduced in 1876 and 1886. Documented bills were introduced by James Richardson in 1893 (H.R. 1354; Congressional Record containing the Proceeding and Debates of the Fifth- Third Congress, First Session also Special Session of the Senate. Volume XXV. Washington Government Printing Office, 1893.

⁶⁸ By Mr. Bate: A bill (S.4058) making an appropriation for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church at Murfreesboro, Tenn.; to the Committee on Claims." pg. 146. Journal of the Senate of the United States of American being the Second Session of the Fifty- Fifth Congress, at the City of Washington December 6, 1897. Washington, Government Printing Office 1898.

⁶⁹ Presbyterian Church at Murfreesboro v. United States, 33 Court of Claims 339.

⁷⁰ MF502, Minutes of the Session, July 26, 1899, 339.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

(300) three hundred to (1200) twelve hundred graves each. 1. In the City Cemetery adjoining the site of the Old Presbyterian Church, there are about (300) Three hundred graves, mostly with headboards in a good state of preservation and bearing the usual inscriptions, but the grounds have no enclosure...⁷¹

From this we passed on to the City Cemetery, and carefully gathered all from there. Most of these died in 1862; quite a number from wounds received in the fight with the rebel General Forrest when he recaptured this city.⁷²

According to the report entitled "Prisoners of War in National Cemeteries in the States of Kentucky and Tennessee," another four bodies were moved from "the Murfreesboro Graveyd" to Stones River National Cemetery. The Old City Cemetery is mentioned again in official reports from 1867 and 1868:

The dead already interred in this cemetery [Stones River National Cemetery] were brought from the battlefields of Stones River and the burial grounds of the various field hospitals in that vicinity, the city cemetery at Murfreesboro and the various hospital burying grounds in and around that place...⁷³

To date, no detailed records concerning the number of Confederate dead originally buried in the City Cemetery have been identified. Initially, over 2,000 of the Confederate dead from the Murfreesboro area were placed in a Confederate Memorial Cemetery established south of the town.⁷⁴ These bodies were subsequently relocated to a mass grave in the Confederate Circle in Evergreen Cemetery.

Although the historical documentation is silent, we can speculate with some confidence that by 1870, a number of citizens no longer considered the Old City Cemetery to be a tranquil resting place for the dead. In 1872, the City of Murfreesboro purchased twenty acres from Dr. James Maney to create a new city cemetery to be called Evergreen Cemetery. Establishment of a new public cemetery is not, at face value too surprising, but some discussion is warranted since the Old City Cemetery does not appear to have been "full" at the time.

As noted previously, burials in the Old City Cemetery seem to have expanded from north to south. At the time of the creation of the cemetery, State Street did not extend through the city cemetery. Once the cemetery was closed with the creation of Evergreen Cemetery, the southern end of the cemetery was apparently unused or at least contained no burials with obvious stones or other markers.

⁷¹ E.B. Whitman to A.R. Eddy, December 1, 1865. pg. 7. Official Records of the Civil War, Copy on file, Stones River National Battlefield, Murfreesboro.

⁷² Office of Superintendent, Stone's River National Cemetery, Murfreesboro, Tenn., October 5, 1866. William Earnshaw, Chaplain, U.S. Army, Superintendent.

⁷³ E.B. Whitman, 1867. Reports on Nat'l Cemeteries, Dept. of the Cumberland, No. 12. Official Records of the Civil War, Copy on File, Stones River National Battlefield, Murfreesboro; E. B. Whitman, 1868. Report of Disinterments of Union Soldiers in Parts of Tennessee and Alabama. E.B. Whitman, Louisville KY, April 6, 1868. Official Records of the Civil War, Copy on file, Stones River National Battlefield, Murfreesboro.

⁷⁴ *Murfreesboro Monitor*, December 7, 1867.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

By 1897, the Sanborn-Perris maps indicate by a dotted line that an extension of State Street was projected in the near future – dividing the Old City Cemetery into a northern and southern section. (Figure 8) The portion of the Old City Cemetery lying south of State Street was sold by the City of Murfreesboro in 1912.

I, G.B. Giltner, as Mayor of the City of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, do hereby sell, transfer and convey in simple to Chas. F. Partee and Jas. M. Avent equally the following parcel or lot of real estate situated in the second ward of the city of Murfreesboro, the Southern portion of that is known as the old city cemetery, bounded as follows: - beginning at Scales' Northeast Corner, formerly Fly's in the South edge of said walk on East State Street, and running thence South 3 degrees 5 minutes West 9 poles 12 links to the fence, a stake; thence South 82 degrees 25 minutes East 10 poles 7 ½ links to a stake; thence North 6 degrees 40 minutes East 9 poles 24 ½ links to edge of concrete walk on South side of State Street; then with sidewalk North 85 degrees 15 minutes west 11 poles 13 links to the beginning containing 104.6 poles June 22, 1912. Registered July 4 1912.⁷⁵

A portion of this lot was sold in 1917 by C.F. Partee and J.M. Avent to the trustees of Benevolent Society No. 11.

On the North by State Street, on the East by another lot belonging to said Partee and Avent; on the south by land owned by Blumenthal and others; on the west by a lot owned by the Sons and Daughters of Cyrene; the lot hereby conveyed lying on the south side of said State Street; Fronting thirty feet on said street, and running south or about South 157 feet more or less between parallel lines to the North line of a low owned by said Blumenthal and others and being a portion of the old City Cemetery conveyed to us by the City of Murfreesboro, deed to which is duly recorded. November 1917.⁷⁶

Surviving records provide no clues as to whether this portion of the Old City Cemetery had been used for burials without long-lasting monuments during the mid-late 1800s. With no assumption of knowledge or fault in mind, it is known that the boundaries of many "old city cemeteries" in Tennessee were reduced in the early twentieth century because no stone markers or other evidence was present. At this point, there is no way to determine whether this sold section once had unmarked burials on it.

Although a number of interments were relocated to the "new" city cemetery, other unmarked graves still retain their original interments. An unknown number of unmarked or poorly marked graves were created in the cemetery during the early period.

... at City Cemetery is grave of a young girl who died away from home among strangers -- Blanche Gibson of Mississippi, a student at Soule College in 1858. It was impossible for her remains to be sent home. Her trunk stayed at the school and in the latter part of

⁷⁵ Rutherford County Deed Book 54, 593.

⁷⁶ Rutherford County Deed Book 59, 569.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

1862, soldiers used college building for hospital. They were curious about the locked trunk. After the war it was found that the trunk had disappeared. The young girl lies in an unmarked grave.⁷⁷

Numerous burials were made in existing family plots through the end of the nineteenth century, but only four known burials date to the twentieth century: Priscilla Burton Carter (1836-1900), Nina Lawrence Vaughan (1866-1908), Richard C. Cawthon (?-1917), and Daniel S. Brown (1845-1931).

The Commemorative Years (1931-Present)

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the property began to re-emerge as an important place on the landscape, particularly for commemorating the history and heritage of the city and county. The earliest known commemorative marker acknowledging the significance of the First Presbyterian Church was placed in 1933 by the Colonel Hardy Murfree Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Other commemorative markers for soldiers of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War were placed at various times over the following decades. However, by the 1960s, the property was in extensive disrepair.

On March 19, 1964, the Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists (DAC) passed and transmitted to the Mayor a resolution urging the "City Council of Murfreesboro to have the City Cemetery restored immediately and some provision made for maintenance." By June 25, Mayor W.H. Westbrook and the City Council passed a resolution supporting restoration and maintenance of the Old City Cemetery. By March 1965, the "City of Murfreesboro had erected a fence around the Old City Cemetery and that the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities had donated funds for the entrance."⁷⁸

With the approach of the United States Bicentennial, the Old City Cemetery became a central focus of the city and county celebrations. In September 1975, the DAC requested that a state historical marker commemorating the First Presbyterian Church be placed in the Old City Cemetery. That marker was cast by January 1976 and a dedication ceremony was held on February 22, with Representative John Bragg providing the address.⁷⁹

On July 3, 1976, Mayor Westbrook presided over a United States Bicentennial Ceremony rededicating the Old City Cemetery. The ceremony included dedication of two additional markers in the Revolutionary War Soldiers row for William Cocke and Peter Jennings. These markers were sponsored by the Colonel Hardy Murfree Chapter of the DAR. Since this time, the City of Murfreesboro, Department of Parks and Recreation has maintained the cemetery.

The 2003 archaeological project at the site and subsequent temporary exhibition at the Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center also constitute commemorative efforts associated with the

⁷⁷ Murfreesboro Home Journal 28 June 1929.

⁷⁸ Minutes of the Jameson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Colonists, March 18, 1965.

⁷⁹ Minutes, Captain Thomas Jameson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Colonists, September 15, 1975.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 29Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Bicentennial Celebration for Rutherford County. Most recently, the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro initiated a year-long celebration of their Bicentennial to culminate in April 2012.

MODERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Between June 2 and July 2, 2003, the Middle Tennessee State University summer archaeological field school was conducted under the direction of Dr. Kevin E. Smith at the site of the Old First Presbyterian Church in conjunction with the bicentennial celebration of Rutherford County, Tennessee.⁸⁰

According to several visitors to the 2003 field project, portions of the foundations of the Old First Presbyterian Church were visible on the ground surface throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Anecdotal evidence suggests that school groups were occasionally taken on field trips to the "old church foundations" during that era. At some point in the not too distant past, however, landscaping fill was brought in to cover the exposed foundation stones. Although unconfirmed, it seems like that this event coincided with the city beautification project in the late 1960s through mid-1970s.

Investigations in 2003 consisted of seventy-four square meters of excavation units (Figure 12). The most significant discovery was the exposure of the (relatively) intact foundations for the entire north wall of the church, including the northwest and northeast corners (Figures 14, 16-17). Additional portions of the remains of the east and west walls were also uncovered, along with several exterior features (Figure 13). Although we were not able to identify surviving remains of the southern wall with certainty, using a mix of historical documents and archaeological findings, the full exterior foundations of the church can be outlined relatively confidently (Figure 13).

Church Architecture

During the 2003 field season, surviving limestone coursework for almost the entire north foundation wall was uncovered, including a projecting section centered on the front wall that probably served as a support for the front or outside of the church bell tower. Excavation units placed to identify the east, west, and southern foundations indicate that the cut limestone blocks from these foundation walls were thoroughly salvaged or "robbed" after destruction of the church (Figure 21).

Most of the artifacts recovered during the investigations fall into two categories: 1) architectural remains of the church building; and 2) military artifacts related to use of the church as a field hospital and storehouse during the Civil War. The lack of significant quantities of other types of artifacts is not unexpected, given the function as a church for the forty years of its use -- churchyards were frequently kept cleaner than residential lots. Almost 40,000 architectural group artifacts (90% of the total assemblage) were recovered during the 2003 season (this tally does not

⁸⁰ Kevin E. Smith, "Archaeological Investigations at 40RD271: Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro," *Report of Archaeological Investigations* No. 7, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 30Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

include over five tons of brick rubble fragments and four tons of limestone debris recorded and discarded in the field). Only thirty whole bricks, hand molded in wooden box molds, were recovered during the excavations, suggesting that most of the whole bricks were salvaged (Figure 28). Thousands of remnants of wall plaster were recovered from the majority of excavated units. As outlined in the affidavits submitted during the claims process, "the ceiling of the house and the galleries and partition are to be lathed and have three coats of plaster, the last coat to be white finished."⁸¹ Many of the excavated samples (Figure 27) retain white finish and lath impressions. Over 36,000 fragments of window glass were recovered -- nearly 80 percent of the total artifacts. This represents a loosely estimated fifty square feet of window glass (Figure 25). According to descriptions, the church sported twenty large windows (3.5 x 8 ft) with two rows of five on the east and west faces (comprising about 560 square feet of window panes). Other objects recovered associated with architecture of the church include several fragments of Rockingham door knobs that probably date to between 1839 and 1860 (Figure 15), and a Parliament or "butt" hinge that is of the appropriate size to have come from a box pew.⁸²

One striking set of objects is the nearly 350 brass furniture tacks recovered from throughout the interior and immediately outside the front doors of the church (Figure 24). Relative to other excavations at roughly contemporaneous sites in the Tennessee area, this is an enormous quantity of furniture tacks. For example, much larger scale excavations at the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century sites of Fort Southwest Point in (NR 7/31/72) Kingston, Roane County, yielded thirteen examples and Fort Blount in Jackson County only twenty-four examples.⁸³ Large scale excavations at a domestic residence of similar date, the Gowen Farmstead in Davidson County, yielded only nine brass tacks.⁸⁴ One possible explanation is that the tacks were associated with the relatively fancy family box pews of the church, possibly as upholstery tacks on kneeling rails or seats. Deposition of the small quantities of tacks beneath the church floor would have taken place during use of the church. Although it remains possible that these are Civil War era items discarded by the military at the church, their distribution within the interior of the church and concentration in two areas to the left and right of the church doors suggest a more likely interpretation. The very large concentrations in the church yard to the left and right of the doors is attributed to dismantling of the pews during the Civil War. Some corroboration for this possibility is provided by the historic documentation referencing the removal of the pews just prior to the Battle of Stones River for use of the church as a field hospital.

Although a small number of small primarily clothing related items (buttons, hook and eye fasteners) ante-dating the Civil War can be attributed to loss through the floorboards during the church period, many of the non-architectural objects clearly relate to use of the church building as a field hospital and storehouse during the Civil War. A significant number of arms related objects were identified, including twenty-four percussion caps and fourteen large caliber military bullets (Figures 23-24).

⁸¹ Congressional Jurisdiction Case 6575, Presbyterian Church v. United States, Record Group 123, National Archives, Washington D.C.

⁸² Affidavits describing the church in the National Archives state "each pew will have a panel door hung with parliament butts."

⁸³ Samuel D. Smith, *Fort Southwest Point Archaeological Site: A Multidisciplinary Interpretation*, Research Series No. 9, Tennessee Division of Archaeology, Nashville. 1993; Samuel D. Smith and Benjamin C. Nance, *An Archaeological Interpretation of the Site of Fort Blount, a 1790s Territorial Militia and Federal Military Post, Jackson County, Tennessee*, Research Series No. 12, Tennessee Division of Archaeology, Nashville, 2000.

⁸⁴ Guy G. Weaver, Jeffrey L. Holland, Patrick H. Garrow, and Martin B. Reinbold, *The Gowen Farmstead: Archaeological Data Recovery at Site 40DV401 (Area D), Davidson County, Tennessee*. Garrow & Associates, Inc., Memphis. 1993.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 31

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Other clearly Civil War related items are four General Service line eagle military buttons with a shield of stripes (Figure 22). Other objects found in association with Civil War artifacts include a brass harmonica plate, half of a canteen, and a toy jack -- all of which are likely to have been used by soldiers. A final set of three objects found in direct association with Civil War artifacts beneath the rubble of the church walls are three early nineteenth century tombstone fragments (Figure 26). In comparison to similar stones extant in the cemetery, the unweathered appearance of these fragments suggests that they were broken not long after their placement as tombstones. The context and appearance of these fragments provides corroboration of period documents suggesting that tombstones were broken and desecrated during the Civil War use of the cemeteries and church.

Church Yard Features

In addition to the architecture of the church proper, a number of features related to construction of the church and landscaping features were discovered. In the front of the church, a surviving portion of a roughly laid brick pavement was discovered (Figure 18). Although not conclusively demonstrated, the rough-lain nature of the feature suggests that it was not created by the church congregation, but rather may have been added hastily during Civil War use of the church as a field hospital or storehouse.

In addition, two large postholes and molds (Features 8 and 17 on Figure 13) shored by densely packed brick rubble (Figures 19-20) are aligned with the belltower foundations, suggesting they were used as supports for scaffolding during raising of the two story walls and seventy-foot-high bell tower.

Finally, three features identified between the church foundation and the first row of tombstones in the Presbyterian Burying Ground appear to represent postholes from the fence enclosing the church lot (Features 4, 24, and 31 on Figure 13). Two of the postholes are disproportionately large for this purpose, but from their location appear to represent "gate posts" for a gate leading from the church lot into the cemetery.

The most productive areas for future archaeological research are in the interior of the church building, where dense layers of brick rubble, plaster, and mortar have protected the artifacts and below-ground architecture. Additional archaeological research could confirm the location of interior walls and identify artifacts associated with both the church and the Civil War occupation.

Other significantly productive areas for future archaeological research include the yard areas to the front, sides, and rear of the church. Remnants of additional postholes, gates, steps, and pathways may be located there. Other significant features that might be located here would be privies associated with the church and the military occupation of the building.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 32

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

The Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery site is eligible for listing in the National Register under criteria A and D in the areas of historic archaeology, exploration/settlement, social history, and military history. Under criterion A the site is locally significant from 1820-1931 as the burial ground for a significant number of families important in the early social, economic, and political history of the region and as a place of interment for both Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. The Presbyterian Burying Ground and Old City Cemetery meet the requirements for criteria consideration D (cemeteries). Under criterion D, the archaeological potential of the Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery site falls into two significant categories: 1) Architecture and Landscape of the Church (local significance); and 2) Short-term Field Hospital and Civil War Encampment (state significance).

In sum, the Old First Presbyterian Church site has the potential to contribute substantial information pertinent to the architecture of early churches in Middle Tennessee and short-term field hospitals during the Civil War. The cemetery components of the nominated property represent the earliest extant major public cemeteries of Murfreesboro. Additional information, particularly relevant to Civil War interment practices, may be extracted from these portions of the property through the use of non-invasive geophysical surveys, including magnetometry and ground penetrating radar.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 33

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Acklen, Jeannette Tillotson

1933 *Tennessee Records: Volume 1, Tombstone Inscriptions and Manuscripts*. Nashville. Reprint edition 1967, Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore.

Beers, D.G. & Company

1878 *Map of Rutherford County, Tennessee from New and Actual Surveys*. Compiled and Published by D.G. Beers & Company, Philadelphia. Engraved by Worley and Bracler, Philadelphia. Printed by E. Bourgan.

Benjamin, Asher

1816 *The American Builder's Companion*, 3rd edition. R.P. & C Williams, Boston.

Campbell, Annie E.

1939 A History of the First Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1811-1935. Compiled and edited by Annie E. Campbell.

Carney, Kate

1862 (manuscript) Kate Carney Diary: April 15, 1861-July 31, 1862. Call number 139 (Manuscripts Dept., Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). Electronic Copy.

Daniel, Susan G.

2005 *Cemeteries and Graveyards of Rutherford County, Tennessee*. Rutherford County Historical Society Publication 54. Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Garrett, Jill K.

1968 Old City Cemetery. Manuscript, copy on file, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro.

Hooper, Ernest

1980 First Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee: The First Century. *Rutherford County Historical Society Publication* 14, pp. 1-32. Murfreesboro.

Lilja-King, Kristine

2001 Above-ground Historical Archaeological Investigation at the Old City Cemetery, Murfreesboro, Rutherford County, Tennessee. Paper presented at the South Central Historical Archaeological Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 34

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Ray, Alice N.

1978 The State Capitol (1819-1826). *Rutherford County Historical Society Publication No. 11*, pp. 1-6.

Smith, Kevin E.

2003 Burials in the Old City Cemetery, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Manuscript on file, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro.

2007 Archaeological Investigations at 40RD271: Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro. *Report of Archaeological Investigations No. 7*, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Smith, Samuel D. and Benjamin C. Nance

2003 *A Survey of Civil War Era Military Sites in Tennessee*. Research Series No. 14. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Nashville. Also available in electronic format: <http://tennessee.civilwarsourcebook.com/cws-index.php?menu=sur> . Retrieved 9/25/2011.

Spence, John C.

1991 *The Annals of Rutherford County*. Murfreesboro, Rutherford County Historical Society (vol. 1, 1799-1828; vol. 2, 1829-1870).

1993 *A Diary of the Civil War*. Murfreesboro, Rutherford County Historical Society.

Wilgus, Mary H.

1981 Murfreesboro's Old City Cemetery: Record of the Past. *Publication No. 17*, pp. 53-76. Rutherford County Historical Society, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 36

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

10. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro and Old City Cemetery site consists of 3.53 acres identified as parcel 91-04000 on the attached Rutherford County Tax Map. The entire parcel is enclosed by a chain-link fence on the property line, bounded on the north by East Vine Street, the south by East State Street, and on the east and west by various privately owned parcels.

The nominated property includes all of the extant acreage associated with the property and contains all extant resources associated with the Old First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro and Old City Cemetery.

See Figure 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 37

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs by: Kevin E. Smith, Middle Tennessee State University
Date: 2003, 2004, 2011
Digital Files: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville Tennessee

- #1 Vine Street Entrance, View to Southeast. 10/16/2011.
- #2 Presbyterian Burying Ground and site of Old First Presbyterian Church. View to west. 3/28/2004.
- #3 Old City Cemetery. View north from near State Street. 3/28/2004.
- #4 Tablet style marker at far left: "FANNY P. WALLACE / was born / July 7th & died / Nov. 22nd 1833." Maney Family Plot to left of large tree in center. View to east. 10/16/2011.
- #5 Old City Cemetery, view to southeast. 3/28/2004.
- #6 Row of Revolutionary War Soldier Commemorative Stones in northwest corner of property. View to west (non-contributing). June 2003.
- #7 State Historical Marker in northwest corner of property. View west. October 16, 2011..
- #8 Commemorative Marker in northwest corner of property placed by Daughters of the American Revolution. October 16, 2011.
- #9 Example of large obelisk style tombstone: "VIOLET L. / CONSORT / of / J.D. ALEXANDER / BORN SEPT15 1807 / DIED APRIL 15 1853." 3/28/2004.
- #10 Cluster of large obelisk style markers on western edge of cemetery. View to west.. 3/28/2004.
- #11 Large monument near center of cemetery: "A tribute of respect to the memory of MRS. SARAH S. HOLMES. Consort of Dr. Henry Holmes and Daughter of Bedford & Sarah Brown. She was born in Georgia Nov. 25th 1806 and died in this place the 19th of August 1840. Unusual intelligence and a most benevolent & kind heart endeared her to her relatives & friends. We humbly trust she sleeps in Jesus having long professed faith in Him who is the resurrection and the life." View to south. 3/28/2004.
- #12 Example of Early four-sided Masonic tombstone: "John L. Jetton. Born in Mecklenburg Co N Caro Decr 11th 1778. Died June 25th 1854." 3/28/2004.
- #13 Example of several ledger style grave markers in the Old City Cemetery: "Evander McIver." Although most are broken, pieces are generally still in place. 3/28/2004.
- #14 Tombstone for Reuben M. Searcy. Inscription reads "R.M. SEARCY / Lieut. 34th Ala Rgt / Born at Tuscaloosa, Ala. / MAR. 20, 1844 / Died at Murfreesboro Tenn. / JAN. 7, 1863." 3/28/2004.
- 15 Burton family plot. View to east. 3/28/2004.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 38

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

-
- 16 LAVINIA B. MURFREE BURTON / Wife of FRANK N.W. BURTON / And Daughter of / COL. HARDY MURFREE / Born in N. Carolina / April 3, 1795 / Died in Kentucky / January 21, 1881 / Her cultured, cheerful, Christian spirit has left an abiding influence. 3/28/2004.
 - 17 JAMES W PHILIPS / SON OF / JOSEPH & DOROTHY / PHILIPS / BORN JUNE 22, 1823 / DIED JULY 24, 1834. 3/28/2004.
 - 18 Example of shouldered tablet marker. "JOHN WATSON PARKER / CO. C / 45 TENN INF / C.S.A." View to east. 3/28/2004.
 - 19 Example of domed tablet marker. "SOPHIA HARRISON / Born Nov 24 1799 / Died March 3 1858 / The devoted Mother." 4/17/2004
 - 20 Obelisk style tombstone with open book (Bible). "In memory of / LEMUEL M. BAIRD / Born Sept 19th / 1804 / Died Oct 7th / 1851" 4/17/2004.
 - 21 First Presbyterian Church lot (in foreground with church ruins beneath row of commemorative markers at right and Old City Cemetery. View South. 10/16/2011.
 - 22 Presbyterian Burying Ground (foreground) and Old City Cemetery. View to southeast. 10/16/2011.
 - 23 Old City Cemetery. View to southwest. 10/16/2011.
 - 24 Old City Cemetery. View to south. 10/16/2011. Anderson Childress monument in foreground just left of center.
 - 25 Old City Cemetery. View to Southeast. 10/16/2011. Modern replacement gravestone for Lawrence family in foreground just left of center.
 - 26 Old City Cemetery. View to south/southwest. 10/16/2011.
 - 27 Old City Cemetery. View to Northeast. 10/16/2011.
 - 28 Old City Cemetery. View to north. 10/16/2011.
 - 29 Old City Cemetery View to North. 10/16/2011.
 - 30 State Street Entrance. 10/16/2011.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 39

LIST OF FIGURES

- 1 Property location on USGS Murfreesboro Quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Series. 1950, Photorevised 1983.
- 2 Tax Map. Parcel 91 00400.
- 3 Key to photographs.
- 4 Outline of the church foundation (white rectangle),
- 5 Portion of 1878 Map of Murfreesboro showing cemetery at upper left (D.G. Beers & Company, 1878).
- 6 Portion of 1878 Map of Murfreesboro with original. Church lot shaded in black (D.G. Beers & Company, 1878).
- 7 Original Plan of Town of Murfreesboro overlaid on D.G. Beers & Company Map 1878 (compiled by William Lytle Patterson; originals on file, Rutherford County Archives). Lot 70 is indicated by a dark rectangle.
- 8 Original church and Presbyterian Burying Ground lot overlaid on 1897 Sanborn Insurance map (Sanborn-Perris 1897)
- 9 Claims Bill Submitted in the House of Representatives, 1872 (Courtesy, Library of Congress, U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875).
- 10 East Avon Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut, constructed 1819 by David Hoadley, a local builder, interpreted as derived from an Asher Benjamin plan (The Architectural Record for 1912 XXXII:87)
- 11 Schematic plan view showing locations of the majority of extant grave markers (adapted from Lilja-King 2001).
- 12 Schematic of 2003 excavation units.
- 13 Archaeological features examined in 2003 (surviving stone foundations shaded in black, robbed builders trenches shaded in gray).
- 14 Initial exposure of north church foundation with brick rubble from walls, June 2003.
- 15 Rockingham door knob fragment recovered during 2003 excavations (ca. 1840-1864).
- 16 Northern (front) wall of church exposed in 2003 excavations (view to west).
- 17 North (front) wall exposed during 2003 excavations (view to east).
- 18 Surviving portion of brick pathway or patio in front of church in 2003.
- 19 View to south of center of church wall. The two large postholes visible in the foreground are interpreted as scaffolding posts used in church construction.
- 20 Close-up of large scaffolding post mold. The hole surrounding the post was packed solidly with brick rubble to support the post.
- 21 Builders trench for west wall of church foundation. Foundation stones have been "robbed" or salvaged.
- 22 United States issue military buttons recovered from beneath the church rubble.
- 23 Sample of Civil War era bullets recovered from beneath the church rubble.
- 24 Sample of brass tacks from church excavations. Also note percussion cap and safety pin at upper left.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 40 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

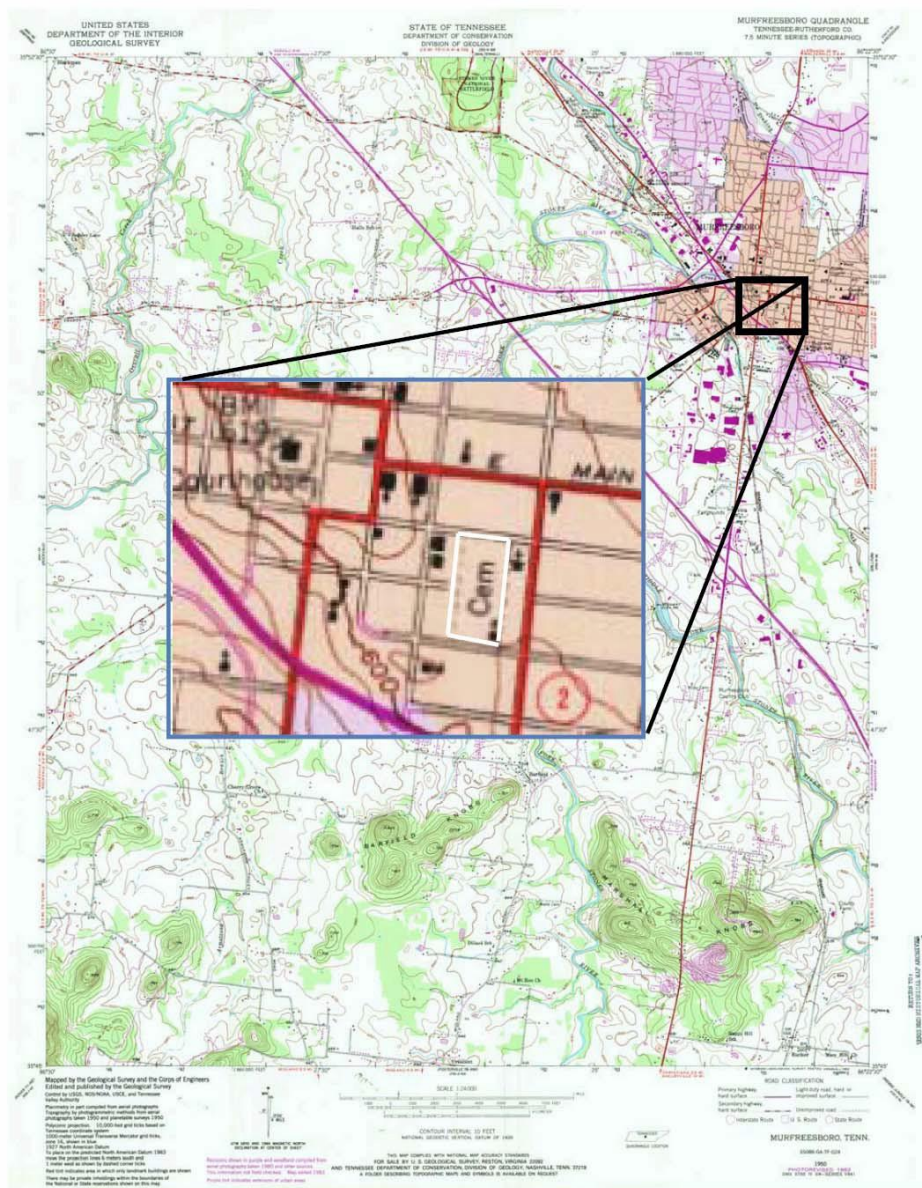
- 25 Sample of broken window panes from original church
- 26 Early nineteenth century tombstone fragment recovered from Civil War deposits inside the church. Note unweathered appearance.
- 27 Plaster "painted white" from interior church walls.
- 28 Whole bricks from the church (hand molded in wooden box molds)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 41

FIGURE 1. Property location on USGS Murfreesboro Quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Series. 1950, Photorevised 1983.



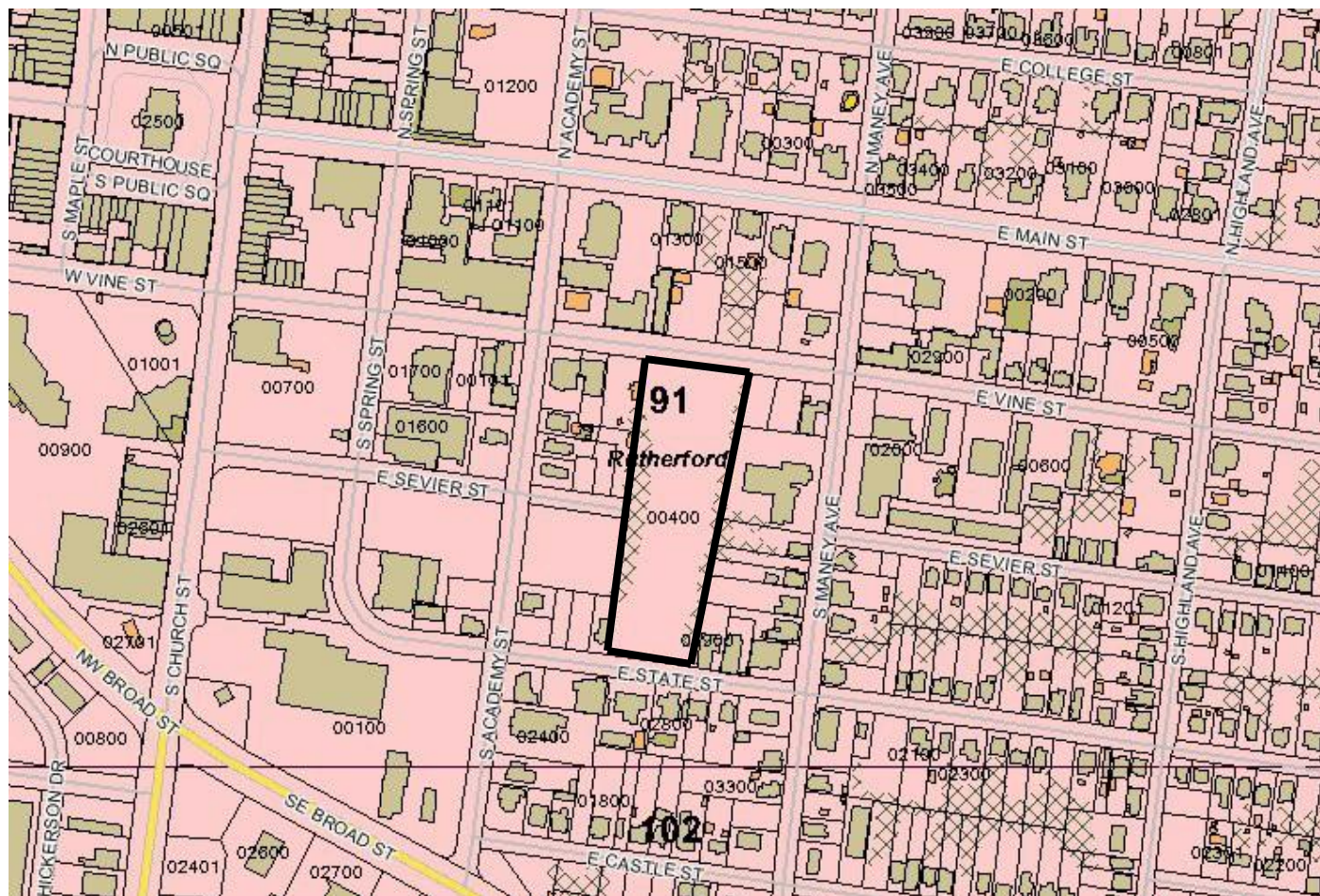
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 42

FIGURE 2. Tax Map. Parcel 91 00400.

TAX MAP



0 250 ft

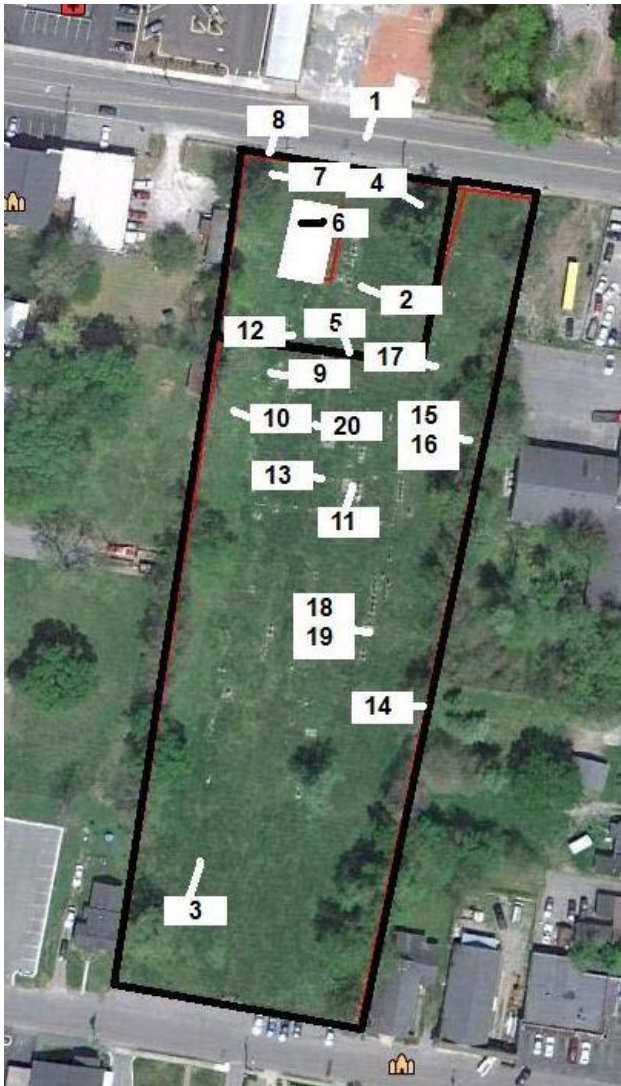
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 43

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 3. Key to photographs.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 44

FIGURE 4. Outline of the church foundation (white rectangle), Old First Presbyterian Church lot (small black rectangle at upper left), and "Old City Cemetery" (large black polygon to east and south of church lot). Overlaid on Google Maps image.



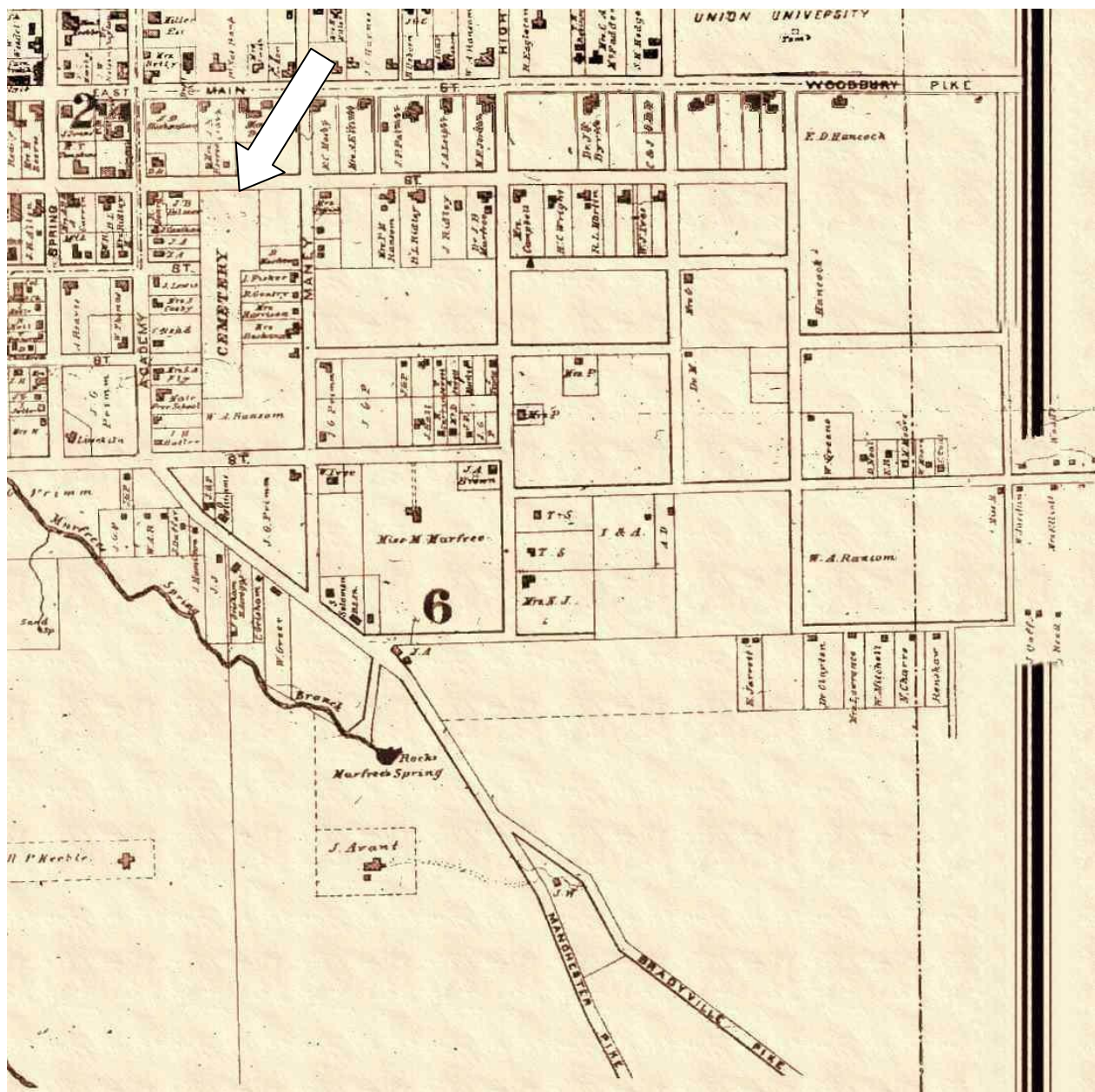
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 45

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

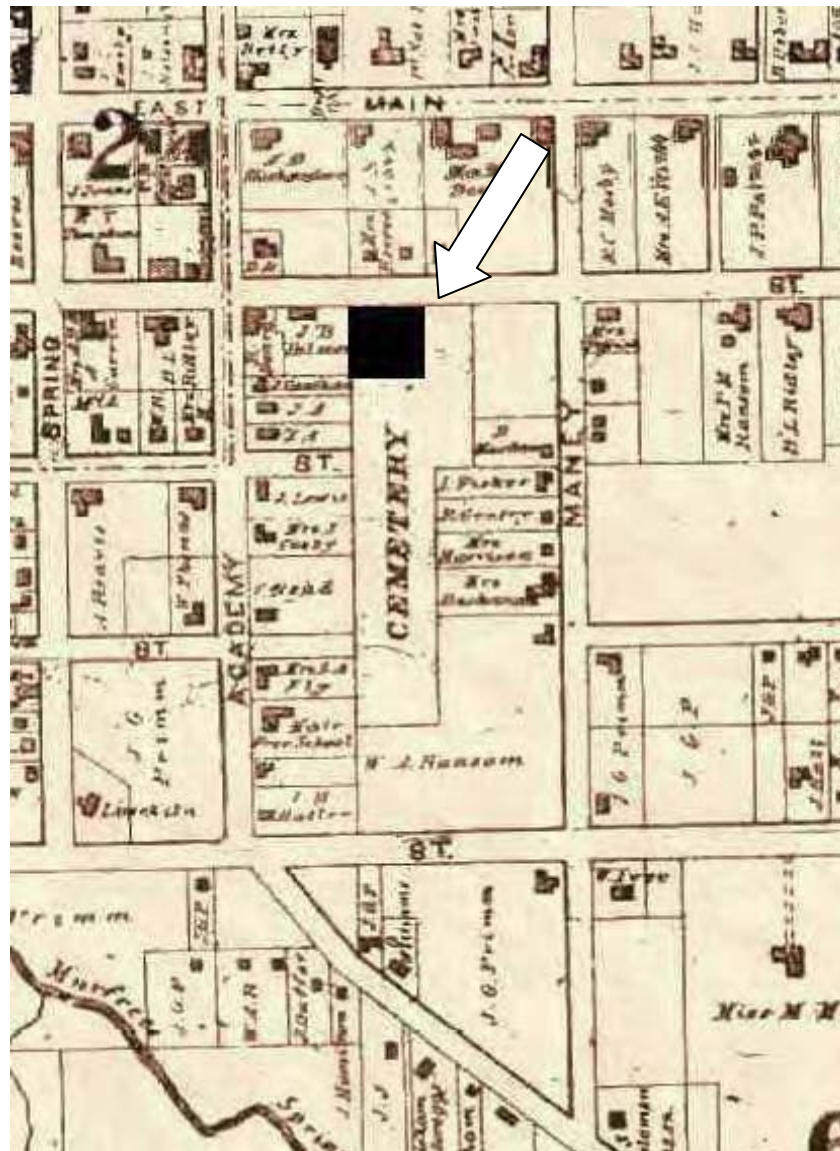
FIGURE 5. Portion of 1878 Map of Murfreesboro showing cemetery at upper left (D.G. Beers & Company, 1878).



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 46

FIGURE 6. Portion of 1878 Map of Murfreesboro with original church lot shaded in black (D.G. Beers & Company, 1878).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

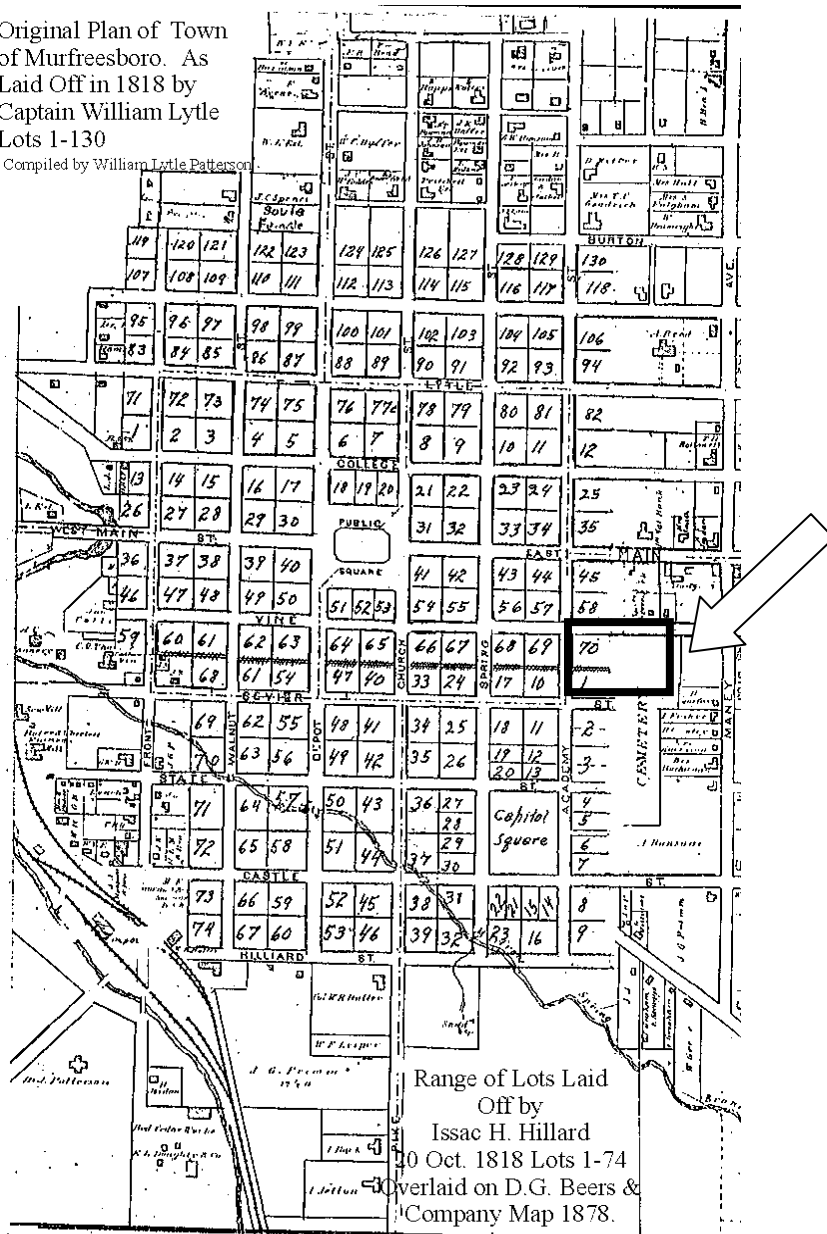
Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 47

FIGURE 7. Original Plan of Town of Murfreesboro overlaid on D.G. Beers & Company Map 1878 (compiled by William Lytle Patterson; originals on file, Rutherford County Archives). Lot 70 is indicated by a dark rectangle.

Original Plan of Town of Murfreesboro. As Laid Off in 1818 by Captain William Lytle
Lots 1-130

Compiled by William Lytle Patterson



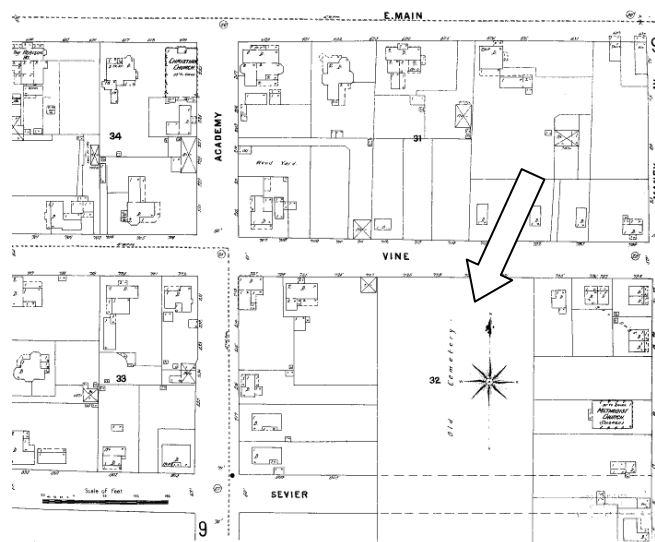
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 48

FIGURE 8. Original church and Presbyterian Burying Ground lot overlaid on 1897 Sanborn Insurance map (Sanborn-Perris 1897)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 49

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 9. Claims Bill Submitted in the House of Representatives, 1872 (Courtesy, Library of Congress, U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875).

Printer's No., 2021.

42^D CONGRESS,
2^D SESSION.

H. R. 2377.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

APRIL 23, 1872.

Read twice, referred to the Committee of Claims, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. BRIGHT, on leave, introduced the following bill:

A BILL

Making an appropriation for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church in Murfreesborough, Tennessee.

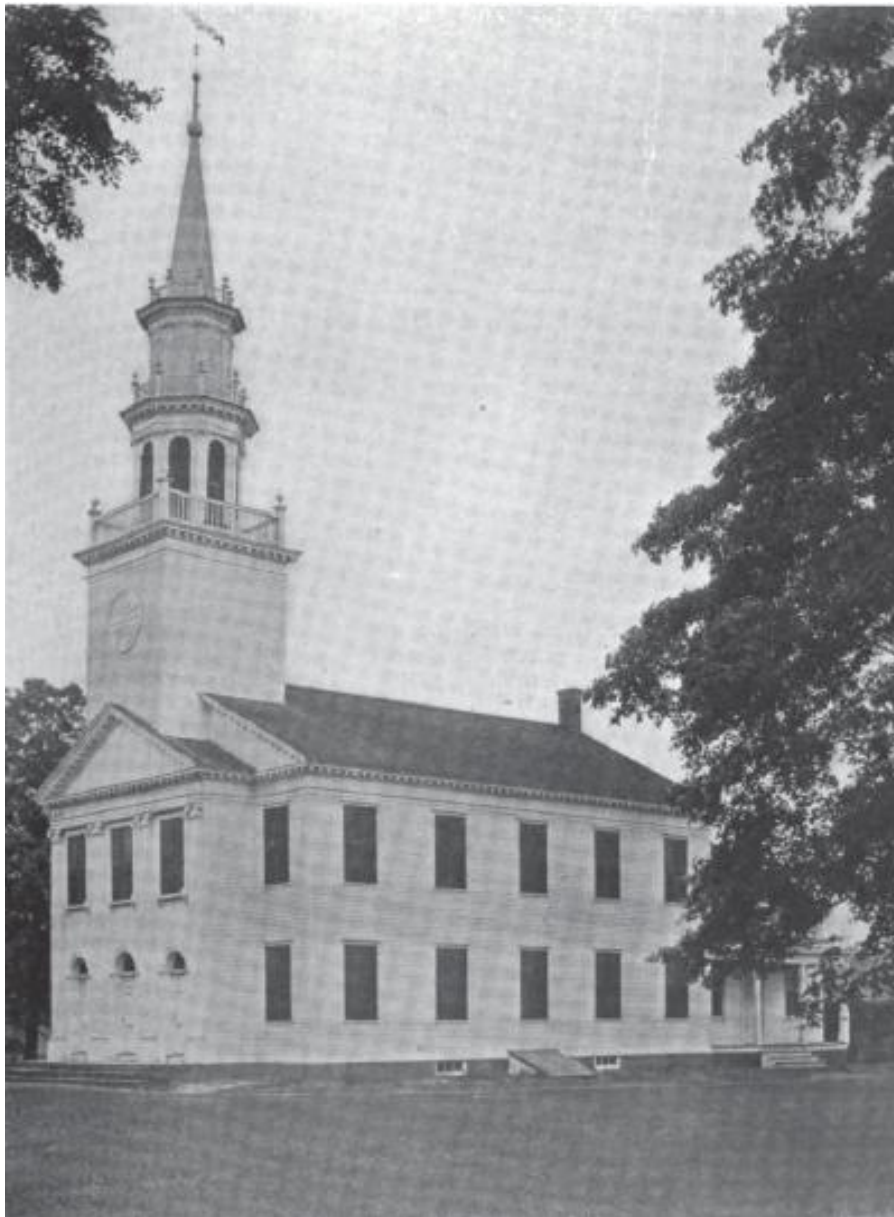
1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That there be, and is hereby, appropriated, the sum of ten
4 thousand dollars, out of the Treasury of the United States,
5 for the use of the Presbyterian Church in Murfreesborough,
6 Tennessee, to pay for the edifice of said church, which was
7 taken down by the military authority of the United States,
8 and the materials thereof used for the protection and benefit
9 of sick and wounded Union soldiers after the battle of Stones
10 River, in eighteen hundred and sixty-three; said amount to
11 be paid to any officer or agent appointed by said church to
12 receive the same.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 50 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 10. East Avon Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut, constructed 1819 by David Hoadley, a local builder, interpreted as derived from an Asher Benjamin plan (The Architectural Record for 1912 XXXII:87)



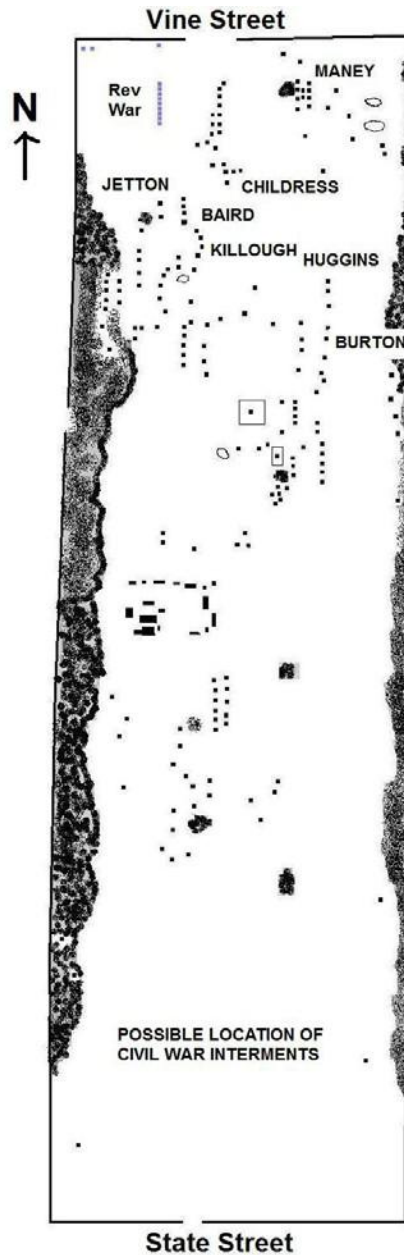
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 51

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 11. Schematic plan view showing locations of the majority of extant grave markers. Selected family plots labeled. (adapted from Lilja-King 2003).

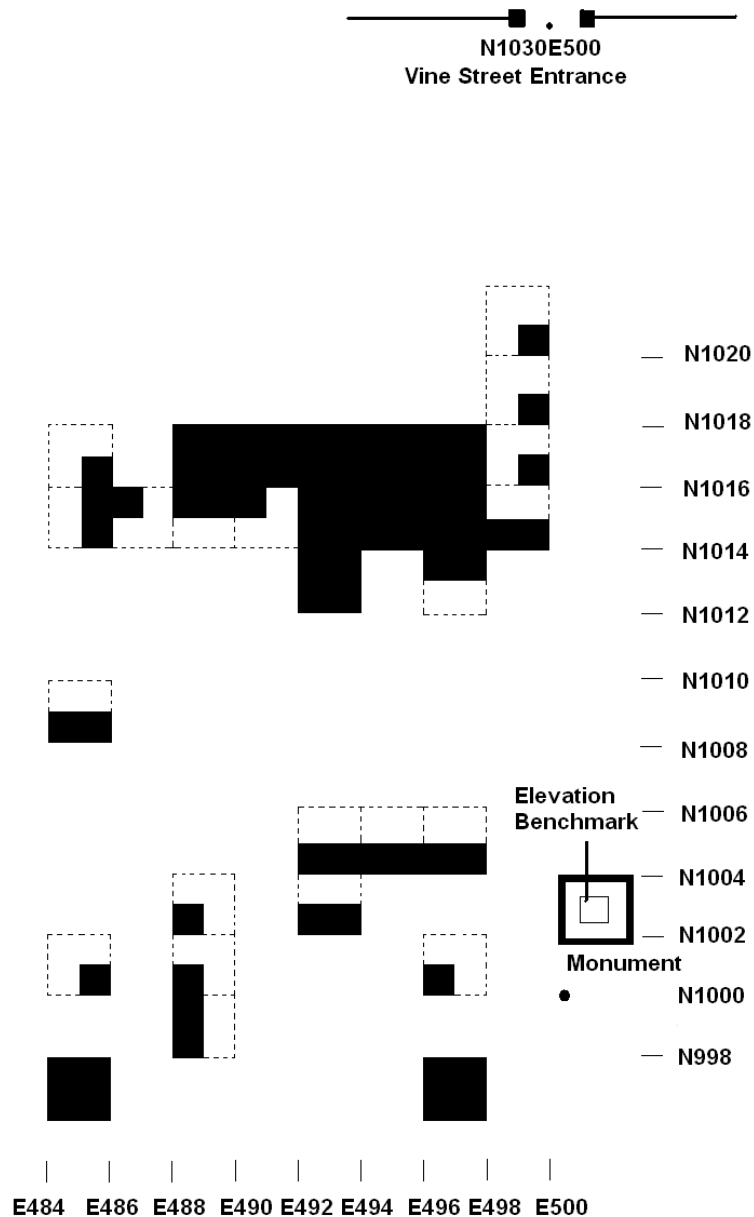


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 52 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 12. Schematic of 2003 excavation units.



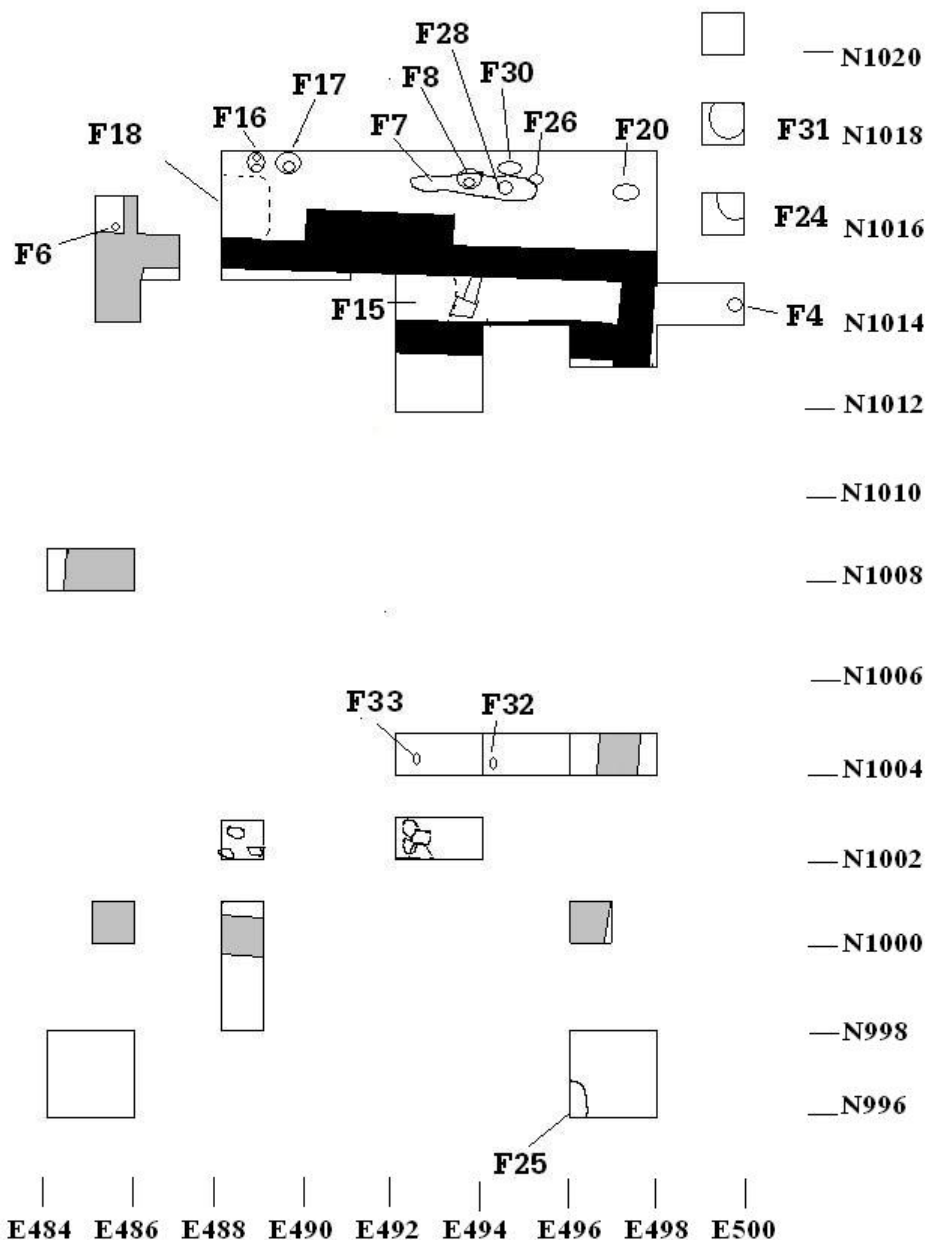
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 53

FIGURE 13. Archaeological features examined in 2003 (surviving stone foundations shaded in black, robbed builders trenches shaded in gray).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 54 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 14. Initial exposure of north church foundation with brick rubble from walls, June 2003.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 55 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 15. Rockingham door knob fragment recovered during 2003 excavations (ca. 1840-1864).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 56 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 16. Northern (front) wall of church exposed in 2003 excavations (view to west).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 57

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 17. North (front) wall exposed during 2003 excavations (view to east).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 58 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 18. Surviving portion of brick pathway or patio in front of church in 2003.



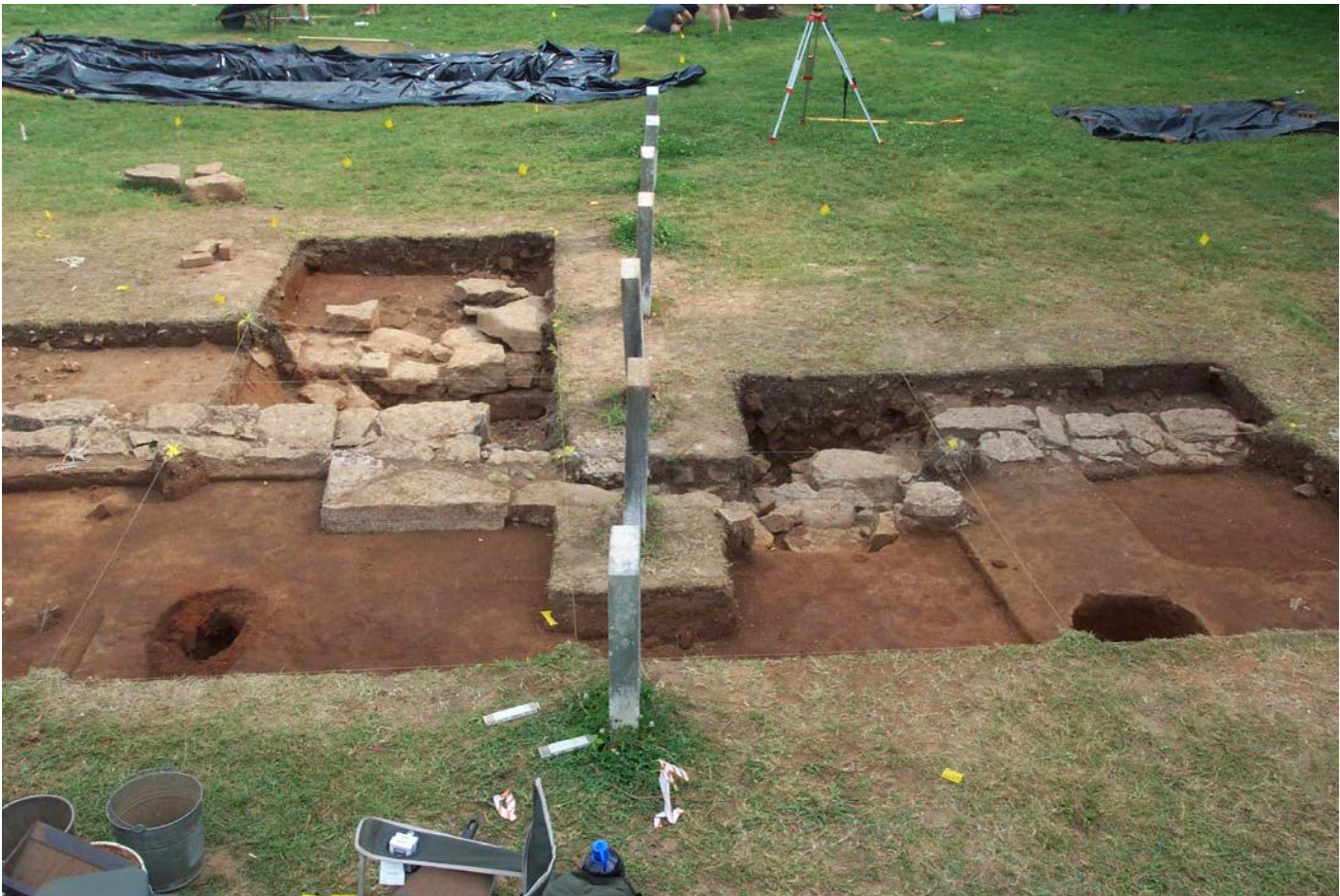
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 59

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 19. View to south of center of church wall. The two large postholes visible in the foreground are interpreted as scaffolding posts used in church construction.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 60 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 20. Close-up of large scaffolding post mold. The hole surrounding the post was packed solidly with brick rubble to support the post.



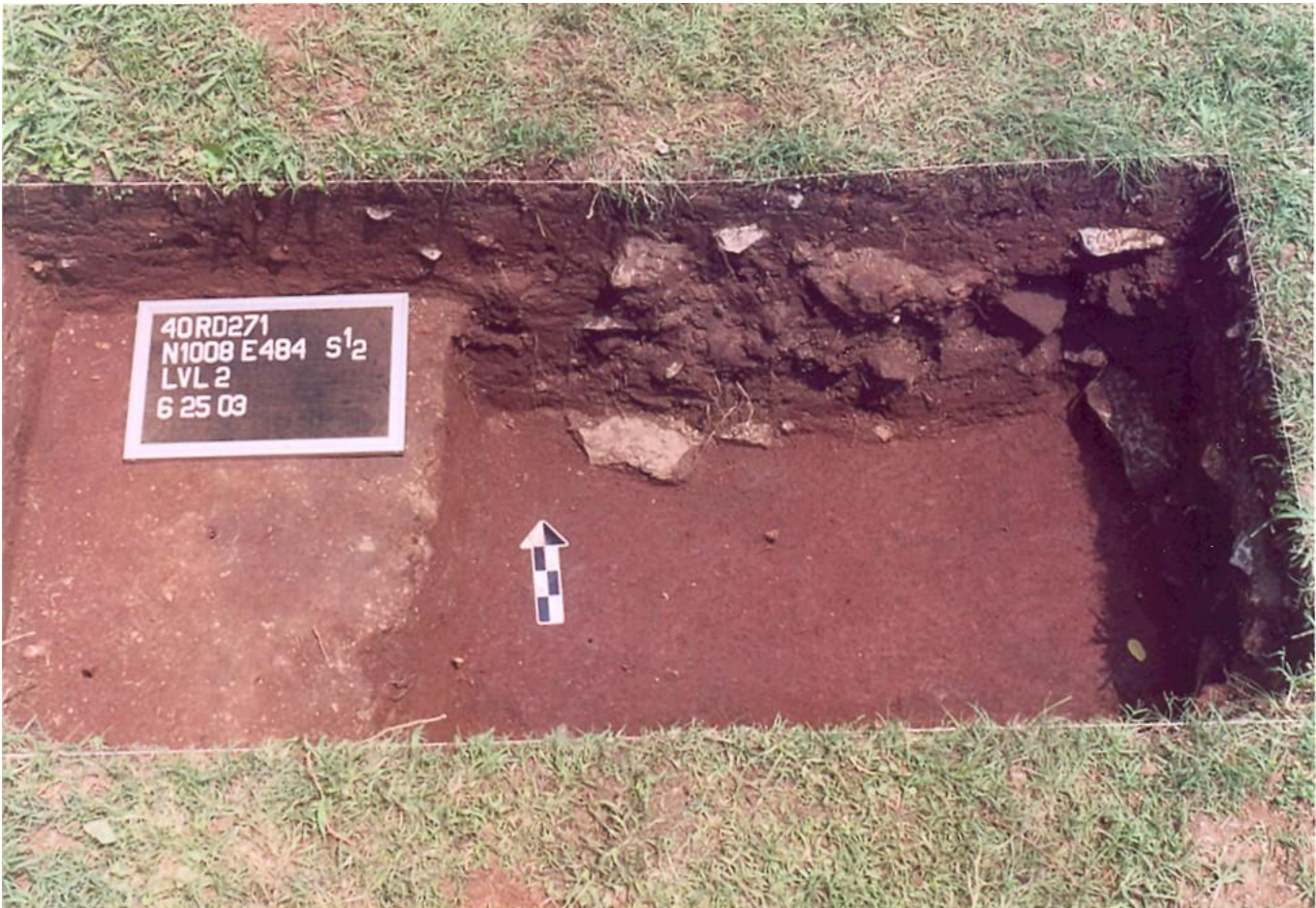
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Section number figures Page 61

FIGURE 21. Builders trench for west church foundation. Foundation stones have been "robbed" or salvaged.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 62 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 22. United States General Service military buttons recovered from beneath the church rubble.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 63

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 23. Civil War Era bullets, 2003 excavations.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 64

Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 24. Sample of brass tacks from church excavations. Also note percussion cap and safety pin at upper left.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 65 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 25. Sample of broken window panes from original church building.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 66 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 26. Early nineteenth century tombstone fragment recovered mixed with Civil War deposits inside the church. Note the unweathered appearance.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 67 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 27. Plaster from interior church walls and ceiling. Left: shows surviving white paint; Right: lathe impressions.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 68 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

FIGURE 28. Whole bricks from the church (hand-molded in wooden box molds).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number appendix Page 69 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
Rutherford County, Tennessee

APPENDIX -- Members of the 14th General Assembly⁷⁷

SENATE	COUNTIES REPRESENTED
Brewer, Sterling	Speaker of the Senate
Polk, James K.	Clerk
Blair, John	Washington and Carter
Bradford, Theoderick F.	Bedford
Brewer, Sterling	Davidson, Dickson and Williamson
Brown, Aaron V.	Lincoln and Giles
Bunch, Samuel	Grainger, Claiborne, and Campbell
Cheatham, John A.	Montgomery and Robertson
Chissum, James	White, Overton, and Jackson
Coleman, Thomas	Maury
Curl, William	Perry, Stewart and Humphreys
Dyer, Joel	Smith
Gillespie, James	Cocke, Sevier, Blount and Monroe
Hall, William	Sumner
Miller, Jacob	Sullivan and Hawkins
Peck, Jacob	Greene and Jefferson
Searcy, William W.	Rutherford
Smart, William C.	Warren and Franklin
Standifer, James	Anderson, Morgan, Roane, Rhea, Bledsoe, Marion, Hamilton and McMinn
Steele, William	Wilson
Walker, Joel	Hickman, Lawrence, Wayne, and Hardin
Williams, Thomas L.	Knox
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
Fentress, James	Speaker of the House of Representatives
Campbell, Thomas J.	Clerk
Allen, Isaac	Cocke
Armstrong, Hugh C.	Overton
Billingsley, John	Bledsoe and Marion
Brady, William	Rutherford
Brown, Thomas	Roane
Bryan, Allen	Sevier
Burns, William	Wayne and Hardin
Caldwell, Abram	Dickson
Camp, John H.	Giles
Carriger, Christian	Carter and Washington
Cowan, Andrew	Blount and Monroe
Cowan, David	Lincoln
Crockett, David	Hickman and Lawrence
Dana, David	Davidson
David, Sampson	Campbell and Claiborne
Douglass, Burchett	Wilson

⁷⁷ Charles A. Miller. 1890. The Official and Political Manual of the State of Tennessee. Nashville, Marshall & Bruce, 204-205.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number append Page 70 Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
 ix Rutherford County, Tennessee

APPENDIX (continued)

Dulaney, Elkanah R.	Sullivan
Erwin, Andrew	Bedford
Fentress, James	Montgomery
Graham, John	Warren
Grundy, Felix	Davidson
Holt, Joshua	Bedford
Jarmon, Robert	Humphreys and Perry
Jarnagin, Noah	Grainger
Kendall, Peter	Stewart
Kincaid, Joseph	Franklin
Locke, William	Jackson
Martin, William	Williamson
Maury, Abram	Williamson
Miller, Pleasant M.	Knox
Mitchell, James C.	Rhea, Hamilton and McMinn
Moore, Cleon	Hawkins
Moore, William	Jefferson
Sevier, Valentine	Greene
Taylor, Isaac	White
Tunnell, William	Anderson
Walton, Timothy	Smith
Watkins, Charles	Sumner
Yancey, William	Maury